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ISSUE 2

COVER #3 OF 3

FEB MAR 2010

Dodgem Logic

We'll show you the life of the mind

Great HIPSTERS IN HISTORY



GREAT HIPSTERS IN HISTORY

GREAT HIPSTERS in HISTORY!

No. 4: Duke Ellington

Born Washington 1899, raised by dignified pianist parents, Edward Kennedy Ellington was known as 'Duke' from childhood. A self-taught composer he commenced his career as a teenager, rapidly building an orchestra that would include many giants of jazz and massively influencing recorded music in general. Star attraction at Harlem's Cotton Club from 1927, by the '40s and '50s he'd expanded into classical and film music, dying an American legend in 1974. Always elegant and courteous, eating dessert first and crossing the segregated South with his musicians in their own luxury railway car, Duke Ellington was one of nature's true aristocrats.

Produced by the Dodgem Logic Brittle Pink Gum Company of Northampton.



GREAT HIPSTERS IN HISTORY

GREAT HIPSTERS in HISTORY!

No. 5: Mother Seacole

Mary Seacole, born of mixed-race parents in Jamaica in 1805, took her mother's herbalist skills onto the battlefields of the Black Sea's Crimean Peninsula during the war against the Ottoman Empire in the mid 1850s. Opening 'The British Hotel' to save countless lives with folk remedies and good cheer, she was decried by Florence Nightingale who dismissed Seacole's enterprise as a brothel. First person to enter Sevastopol after its fall (on a bet), she returned to London in dire circumstances but was rescued by a benefit firework display from grateful servicemen. Dying in 1881, she was Crimea's true ministering angel.

Produced by the Dodgem Logic Brittle Pink Gum Company of Northampton.



GREAT HIPSTERS IN HISTORY

GREAT HIPSTERS in HISTORY!

No. 6: Lenny Bruce

Arguably the inventor of confrontational stand-up, Bruce was born Leonard Schneider in New York, 1925. Debuting in 1947, his unstable background and the influence of jazz produced an improvisational comedy style that fearlessly explored taboos such as race, religion, sex, politics and Bruce's own increasing drug addiction. Hounded by narcotics officers and convicted on obscenity charges in 1964, his fame grew as his freedom to perform dwindled. Invited to Peter Cook's Establishment satire club in the U.K he was deported immediately upon landing. Dying of a morphine overdose in 1966, Lenny Bruce transformed the role of the modern comedian.

Produced by the Dodgem Logic Brittle Pink Gum Company of Northampton.

ROLL UP

Roll up in the coloured bulb-light for a second ride on our dodgems of logic. Just think of this editorial as one of those young men with duck's-arse quiffs, pebble-dashed complexions and closely-spaced eyes that have been applied with a nail-gun; the ones that can only walk normally on a lurching sea of wood and who sullenly drop your £2.50 in their battered leather shoulder bag while planning to knock up your older sister round the back of the hotdog van. Oh, yeah. Yeah, you recognise us now. Give us your lunch money and we'll let you go.

Welcome to issue two. We've got beautiful girls and strange old men ranting from soap boxes. We've got a freak-show of Northampton curiosities. We've got FeeJee Mermaids and the end of civilisation right behind these lurid painted curtains, decorated by the best damn deadbeat paraffin-swiggig carny embellishers in the business. We've even got a free dirty comic book that we'll be handing out behind the main tent after the performance. That's how much we love you. DODGEM LOGIC ~ touching hearts and minds, inappropriately.

Since we spontaneously exploded howling into being from a quantum vacuum a few months back we've attempted to fulfil all of the half-baked promises we made when we were still concussed and babbling with our hair on fire. The regional edition scheme has proved much easier to handle as a woolly-minded opium vision than as an actuality but gradually we're getting all our excrement together, as the youngsters say, so expect some good news on that front by next issue. As for all the wonderful pieces you've been sending in, nearly a thousand gems on file at the last count, they're fantastic but we're swamped. We're having enough trouble fitting in all of the items that we've actually commissioned to our leisurely bi-monthly schedule, to the point where we'll be bumping up our page count to a generous ad-free 64 from issue three (and our price to a frankly greedy £3.50), so please accept our genuine apologies but we can't take in any unsolicited submissions. Really, we should have made that clear in the first issue's indicia, if we'd remembered to include one. Sorry, they say, is the second hardest word. The hardest word is probably sesquipedalian. So, yes, we're contrite on the one hand, but on the other hand we're wearing an ermine glove with which we're grabbing our crotches in sheer self-satisfaction: our web-abattoir, www.dodgemlogic.com, now fully up and running, is the finest and indeed only site that I've ever seen. We managed to get 300 extra-sumptuous Dodgem Hampers to Spring Boroughs sheltered housing residents in time for Christmas, we're currently checking out premises to be used as a central Dodgem Bunker for when it all goes a bit Bruno Ganz in Downfall, and we find ourselves the proud sponsors of local hoop-gods NORTHAMPTON KINGS, for whom we're presently designing the most murderously cool vests in the annals of basketball. Oh, yeah, and next issue we have Gorillaz in the midst, so basically that's pretty much us a thousand, society nil. Lips 2 the floor, western culture. We'll see you in April.

Alan Moore: He-Man and Master of the Universe.

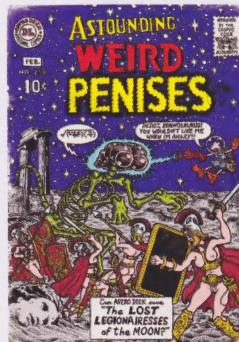
Front & back covers by Mitch Jenkins. Inside front cover, Great Hipsters In History, written by Alan Moore & illustrated by Calluz

Contents

page 1 : Welcome to Dodgem Logic
 page 2 - 5 : Fear of a Black Flag, by Alan Moore
 page 6 - 7 : Guerrilla Gardening, by Claire Ashby
 page 8 - 11 : Take What You Want, by Magaret Killjoy
 page 12 - 13.5 : Johnny Viable, by Steve Aylett
 page 13.5 - 15 : All Tomorrow's Parties, by James Thorpe
 page 16 : World of Illuzion, by Lejome Pindling
 page 17 - 24 : Kitten, Goddess, Bitch, by Melinda Gebbie & Mitch Jenkins
 page 25 : Mr Inferno, by Savage Pencil
 page 26 - 27 : Northamptonshire Strange, by Steve Moore
 page 28 - 29 : Eat To The Beat, by Wendy Jarrett
 page 30 - 31 : The Daily Mustard, by Alex Musson
 page 32 - 33 : Stitch This, by Tamsyn Payne
 page 34 : Whats Her Problem, by Tinc
 page 35 : Kevin O'Neill's Kartoon Korner
 page 36 - 37 : The Eco Chamber, by Dave Hamilton
 page 38 - 39 : The Spinning Doctors, with Nervy & Dr Feelgood
 page 40 : Contributors and local services

Notes from NOHO

Page 1 - 3 : An unexpected view of the sea from Northampton, by Martin Marprelate
 page 4 - 5 : Local music reviews, by Garry Ingham
 page 6 - 7 : Beyond the Norm, by Norman Adams
 page 8 : The Destructor Diaries, by Alan Moore



FREE THIS ISSUE:

The first and only comic book that Alan Moore has ever both written and drawn himself, for fairly obvious reasons.

Dodgem Logic, Issue Two. So in your face all those publications that only reached issue one, like the Bible and that. February-March 2010, co-published by Mad Love (Publishing) Ltd, and Knockabout Comics Ltd, not forgetting a big shout out to our reptilian buddies in the Majestik 12 community: looking good, guys. The entire contents of Dodgem Logic are copyright their individual creators. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine can be reproduced in any way, save brief excerpts for review purposes, without the written permission of Mad Love (Publishing) Ltd, and/or the individual creators in question. We're serious; don't mess with us on this one. We're on first name terms with ancient demonic forces, and those little scamps will totally fuck you. Dodgem Logic is neither seeking nor accepting submissions in the immediate future, nor are we offering subscriptions until we're sure this whole venture isn't going to end up with us in debtor's prison getting bunned by Bernard Madoff. If we change our minds in the future, you'll be the first to know. Dodgem Logic is designed by Cav and Alb at Wallace Create (www.wallacecreate.com). Printed by Southern Print (www.southernprint.co.uk) and distributed by Central Books and Diamond Distributors. All enquiries, please contact Queen Calluz at P.O. Box 927, Northampton, NN1 9DT or by e-mail at info@dodgemlogic.com, unless you are that guy who posted us the stuff about breast milk and thigh boots, in which case be advised that you're creeping us the fuck out and get in touch with Razzle or something instead, ok? For enquiries regarding our Regional Inset Scheme, contact Queen Calluz at the above addresses. And especially for Kevin O'Neill, there! There's your fucking indicia that we missed out in Issue One. Happy now?



FEEL OF A BLACK FLAG

In 1976 Johnny Rotten wanted to be anarchy. He also wanted to get pissed and destroy passers-by. In 2010, when that's a normal Friday night out in any town centre, should we be taking a closer look at history's supposedly scariest political movement?

Alan Moore investigates.

The word anarchy comes with a lot of baggage. It conjures images of men in capes and broad-brimmed hats clutching black bowling balls with fizzing fuses and the helpful legend BOMB scrawled on the side in white emulsion. It's become a kind of shorthand standing for the breakdown of society and order into screaming chaos; into a Hieronymus Bosch landscape populated by looters, berserkers, giants with leaking boats for feet and eggshells for a body. In the tabloid mass-mind, anarchy has been boiled down into an ultra-violent and demented version of *Spy vs. Spy*, adapted from a screenplay by Rasputin and the Unabomber. Hardly an attractive proposition, and yet throughout history this is the cause to which some of our greatest and most humane thinkers have subscribed, and to which countless thousands of brave men and women have devoted or indeed have given up their lives. If Darwin in his later years came to see anarchy as the most sensible political position can we casually dismiss it, either as a wild Utopian dream or as a recipe for howling bedlam? Before we toss anarchy onto the scrapheap of discarded ideas alongside the Flat Earth theory and 110% mortgages, perhaps we could make an attempt to find out what the word actually means?





HITLER IS A TWAT

As often proves to be the case with words, the Greeks most definitely had one for it, in this case anachos, meaning 'without rulers'. It would seem upon the surface to be a straightforward notion, but its full ramifications and its difficulties only become visible through close examination. For example, if there are no rulers, everyone is free to follow their own judgement in all matters, even in the way they define anarchy itself. As you might well imagine, this has led to a bewildering profusion of anarchist subdivisions, categories and splinter movements with radically different views and therefore not infrequently at one another's throats: Communist Anarchists, Free market Anarchists, Egoist Anarchists, Anarchists Green or Syndicalist, Post-Left or Feminist, Anarchists Insurrectionary or Pacifist. Then there's Anarchy Without Adjectives which sounds entirely sensible despite the fact that the words 'Without Adjectives', used here as a descriptive phrase, are actually performing all the functions of an adjective. Faced with this stupefying undergrowth of different strains of anarchy, we might be better off returning to that first and simplest definition, 'without rulers', and see where we go from there.

It could be argued that this state of being without leaders is our natural one, both as a species and as individuals. A new-born infant, child psychologists inform us, can't at first tell where it ends and where the universe begins. The rattle and the cot bars and its mother are seen as extensions of itself, no different to the baby's waving arms and legs. When we were fresh out of the womb, then, we were not just rulers in our own domain: we were its pink and wizened deities, were everything we saw or heard or touched, were the whole cosmos. Only later, after we had learned some rudimentary language skills, did we begin to understand the towering hierarchies of authority, the system of command that we were on the lowest rung of, answerable to our parents who were themselves answerable to their bosses and their landlords, their constabulary and their governments. The governments, presumably, were only answerable to the Queen or God or someone inaccessible and probably imaginary like that.

We grudgingly accepted that we were not even atoms in the cogs of an immense social machine that neither we nor anybody that our great-grandparents knew had ever been consulted during the construction of. And yet, just for a moment there, our natural assumption in the cradle had been that the bunny-rabbit mobile moved the way we wanted it to move and that we were in charge of our own destinies. We were in charge of everything.

The same is true of our emergence as a species, when we lived as tribal family units in our self-governing huts or caves, not vastly different from the separate herds or flocks of animals around us. And while it may seem as if a tribe of people or a herd of animals inevitably will be dominated by a patriarch, a matriarch, an alpha-male or leader, this is not always the case. Our earliest studies with regard to animal behaviour made truckloads of assumptions that were based upon our own behaviour as humans. We identified the leader of a pack as being the big male who sorted out the territorial disputes and had his pick amongst the choicest females, an unlikely hybrid of John Wayne and Russell Brand that we as humans saw fit to impose on the behavioural quirks of deer or wolves alike. Only more recently have we accepted that while the butch alpha male may well be handling all the punch-ups, other individuals all seem to have their own unique importance to the group's wellbeing. Perhaps one might be an animal who always seems to find new food or grazing land. Another might be an old female whom the other members of the herd or tribe will gather round protectively in the event of an attack. It would appear that many animal societies involve various roles and numerous components working in cooperation for the greater good, without the need for any one component of the group to be perceived as leader. While Charles Darwin thought that fierce and often bloody competition was the driving force that guided evolution, there is as much evidence suggesting that cooperation plays an equal if not greater part in the survival of the fittest, such as with the sex-crazed and agreeable Bonobo chimps that are amongst our closest primate relatives.

Looked at from this perspective, it's not anarchy that seems unnatural so much as an imposed and non-consensual authority itself. In any normal human group such as a family or set of friends, excluding members of the Cripps or Bloods, do we still think of one specific person as the leader? Has there genuinely been a head of household since Edwardian times? Mostly, in any halfway functional arrangement there is an informal set of checks and balances that can maintain the equilibrium without the need for regulation from an outside party.



This cooperation between individuals who may not share the same opinion, this ability to recognise and to respect the fact that others have as much right to determine their own lives as we have is in my opinion necessary for any form of anarchy, with or without an adjective, to have a chance of working in no-frills reality. It also demonstrates the seeming paradox that's at the subject's heart: what seems to be a license to do anything we want without restriction turns out, like Aleister Crowley's famous 'Do what thou wilt' motto, to involve the taking on of ultimate responsibility and the demanding task of governing ourselves.

Ultimately, anarchy begins at home. Life without rulers as a serious proposition will entail self-rule, which cannot come about unless we properly accept and understand that we as individuals and we alone are totally responsible for our own lives and destinies. One of the first things that this understanding brings with it is the unsettling realisation that if we are our own leaders, we now have no one to blame and no excuse for failing at the tasks we set ourselves. We cannot blame our background or our parents or society in general for our limitations because we have taken the responsibility for our existence squarely on ourselves. We can't say wistfully that we could have been someone special if we hadn't been held back by our upbringing or our finances; by marrying that man, that woman; having or not having those specific kids. We can't continue with the role of helpless and beleaguered victim in our own lives if we've just decided we are that life's leader, are its heroines and heroes. If we're trying to conceal our flaws it must be said that anarchy's personal freedom offers very little cover. Having lived our lives within the shelter of a rigid and determined social structure, stepping unprotected out into the wind can seem a frightening and chilly proposition. Indeed, many of us make the choice to stay indoors, to put up with the tedium and disappointments that we know rather than risk it all upon a leap into the dark. However much we might wish we were freer in our lives, at heart we have a sense that freedom is a scary if not terrifying thing.

In light of the above, why would anyone take a chance upon self-governance and anarchy? The burden of responsibility may be as great or even greater than if you were governing an actual country...after all, you probably care more about your own wellbeing than a government cares about the wellbeing of its people...so where's the reward? The real reward, it might be said, is in the overwhelming sense of liberation and empowerment that comes with declaring yourself to be an autonomous and self-determined human being, naked underneath the stars and standing fearless at the centre of your unique universe as it rotates about you in its splendour, as it did before you learned the rules, before you even learned the language. In accepting sole responsibility for how your life unfolds you cease to be life's victim and begin to realise the unexpected power you have over your circumstances, without ever seeking to exert power over others, without fucking anybody over. In the heady rush of the experience you might conclude that everyone should have the right to live like this, and it is here in this shift from a personal code of behaviour to an all-embracing social policy that anarchy's most serious problems start to manifest themselves, as even a brief look into the subject's history makes abundantly clear.

Anarchist ideas have been with us since antiquity. We find them in the utterances of Taoist sages from the east and in the works of Greek philosophers such as Diogenes or Zeno from points further west.

The word itself, however, doesn't enter spoken English until 1642 and the upheavals of the Civil War, used as a term of abuse by the Royalists to describe the various factions that made up Cromwell's New Model Army. It's not until the French Revolution of a century thereafter that we first find some of the Enragés who opposed the revolutionary government referring to themselves as anarchists and using the expression positively. It was also in the eighteenth century that William Godwin wrote his *Political Justice*, advocating that the individual act according to his or her individual judgement while allowing every single other individual the same liberty. In 1844 philosopher Max Stirner's book *The Ego and Its Own* suggested individuals were free to do anything that was physically within their power to do, without regard for others, up to and including murder. Stirner's theories later came to be associated with the movement called Egoist Anarchism, although Stirner does not call himself an anarchist. The first writer to do so would be Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865). Proudhon proposed a form of anarchy called mutualism, which although based on the freedom of the individual was more a model for the way in which society might work if governed by anarchist principles, with everybody free to do the work they really wanted to. Proudhon assumed that this would lead to what he called 'spontaneous order' once people had realised the many benefits of mutual cooperation and had organised their towns or villages on a communal basis, with each area governed locally and independently. But how was this utopian condition to be brought about?

In the late eighteen-hundreds and the early twentieth century, a great variety of different answers to this question were put forward. Collectivist Anarchism as defined by Mikhail Bakunin opposed private property, with factories and state-owned institutions to be seized by means of violent revolution and collectivised. Bakunin's followers have probably contributed the most to the traditional depiction of anarchists as bomb-hurling maniacs, but there is no denying the intelligence and shrewdness of the man himself. Bakunin was initially enthusiastic with regard to the aims of the Workingmen's Association known more commonly as the First International, which at that time had Karl Marx as its leading light. Divisions between the two men became swiftly apparent, though, with Bakunin predicting, accurately as it turned out, that a Marxist party following a revolution would simply replace the ruling classes they had fought against.

Peter Kropotkin, on the other hand, while equally opposed to private property, felt that it should be legally abolished rather than acquired by bloody overthrow, following which society would be reorganised into a federation of self-governed communes. Thus the anarchist debate swung back and forth with further schools of thought or warring subdivisions constantly appearing and no unifying principle save for a dislike of authority. Mind you, this dislike was enough to unite anarchists of every stripe against the rise of fascism in Europe from the 1920s to the 1930s, notably during the Spanish Civil War when anarchist militias fought beneath a black flag against General Franco's armies. Their eventual defeat in 1939 was partially assisted by the Stalinists who were meant to be helping in the struggle but who instead persecuted both the anarchists and the dissident Marxists who made up a large part of the rebel forces. Russia's revolution having worked out pretty much as Mikhail Bakunin had predicted around forty years before with Stalin as that nation's new Red Tsar.



Famous defeats, of course, should not be taken as a proof that anarchy can never work. The Paris Commune, formed during 1789 and run upon anarchist principles was working fine until it was suppressed some five years later by the armed might of the National Convention in a brutal slaughter that killed far more ordinary people than all of the French aristocrats who met their end during the revolution but is for some reason far less talked about. Almost a century earlier, French Huguenots who had established working self-sufficient and self-governing communities in London's East End were first pushed into staging a protest by the imposition of a crippling tax on their sole means of income and were then mown down by armed troops who were bivouacked in famous Jack the Ripper landmark Christchurch, Spitalfields.

Both these examples seem to indicate that anarchy is workable and viable, but also illustrate the fact that it will usually be crushed out of existence by the forces of authority that it opposes anywhere that it appears. Although anarchist theory has continued to develop and progress until the present day, where we find fascinating theorists such as Temporary Autonomous Zone author Hakim Bey amongst the vanguard, there is still no clear consensus on how any working anarchist society is to be brought about. We can't realistically expect our rulers to sit by and let a doctrine that gets rid of them establish itself, nor can we suppose that after a few thousand years of having people tell us what to do that many of us would be capable of handling the alternative. Clearly, a large majority of people would need to be educated to a point where they were able to direct their own lives without interfering in the lives of other people. Just as clearly, it is in the interests of no state to educate its people to the point where they could do without it. In the present day, the Internet potentially provides the means for such an education and even allows for the creation of alternate currencies or barter systems such as the Green Pound movement that's intermittently at large in deprived areas of Britain, in which people who are mostly unemployed trade hours of their work-time as a method of avoiding the official currency completely. But even if we could take advantage of these useful-seeming possibilities, is there any conceivable kind of society that would permit such forms of self-sufficiency and self-empowerment to come into being or be widely practiced? In short, how do we get there from here? Where is the bridge that's obviously needed between living under generally useless or oppressive governments and living in the self-determined world that anarchy holds out the hope of? Even if such a benign transitional society could be imagined, how could it be a society that any anarchist would want to be a part of, a society that somehow functioned without rulers?

Given the Greek origins of the word anarchy, we could do worse than look to ancient Greece for a solution. In the city-state of Athens, leadership was managed through a process called sortition, which is basically a type of government by lottery. In all decisions that concerned the state a jury would be randomly appointed from all parts of the community by drawing straws or lots. This jury would then listen carefully to an informed debate presenting both sides of the argument, just as a jury does during a court case. After this a vote is taken on the matter and the jury is dissolved. This system seems to come much closer to fulfilling the conditions of a true democracy, which is to say rule by the people, than our current mode of rule by a sometimes-elected representative can manage. It is also largely corruption-proof. No special interest groups or corporations can buy influence in government if no one knows who government will be until the next time that the straws are drawn. No jury would be likely to vote in a set of special privileges for the jury, such as being able to claim back expenses on the paddocks for their unicorns, when they themselves would no longer be jurors when these perks were ushered in. In fact, it would be in the jury's interest to vote for those measures that would genuinely most benefit the common multitude that they'll immediately be returning to after the ballot.

Obviously, it would take a massive constitutional amendment before any such approach could be adopted, but is constitutional reform really unthinkable when the alternatives are pointless, ineffectual and violent revolution or the option of just sitting back and doing nothing as our mostly unappointed leaders waltz us into wars, disastrous recessions and the possible extinction of our species while demanding that we pay them for providing this unasked-for service?

By removing at a stroke the worst excesses and abuse that come with leadership, such an Athenian approach might at least square the circle with regard to anarchy, allowing a society that has coherence and direction without having rulers in any conventional sense of the term. In times that would seem desperate despite our massive technological advances, perhaps we should invite anarchy in from the cold and take a closer look at the ideas and possibilities that our black-hatted bogeyman might offer us.

**WHAT SHOULD WE DO
ABOUT THAT BLOKE IN
THE CHUMBA WAMBA
T-SHIRT**



URBAN GUERRILLA'S GUIDE TO (CONFIDENCE) OR PUTTING YOUR FOOT DOWN WITH A FIRM HAND (and digging)

NEVER TRUST AN URBAN THISTLE.



ITS A BIGGER PRICK THAN THE LOCAL HOUSING OCCIFER! (actually it's not true)

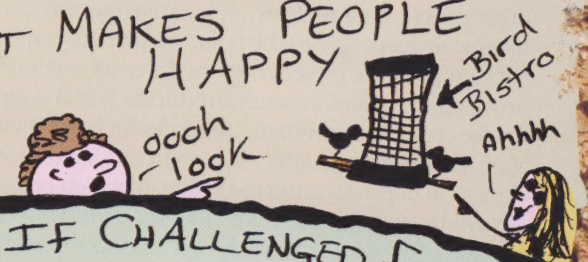
GET SOME MINERALS STICK UP FOR YOURSELF



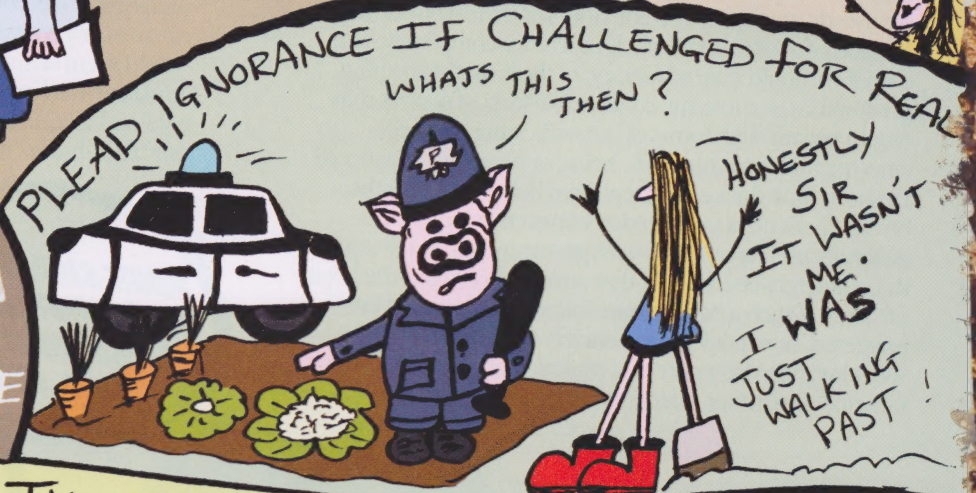
PAY NO ATTENTION TO ANYONE WEARING A BADGE



GAIN ALLIES PUT UP BIRD FEEDERS TO ENCOURAGE WILDLIFE IT MAKES PEOPLE HAPPY



IMPORTANTLY/KNOW IN YOUR OWN MIND, YOU ARE RIGHT AND THEY ARE VERY VERY WRONG.



THE GOOD



THE BAD



AND THE TWO FACED BACK STABBERS



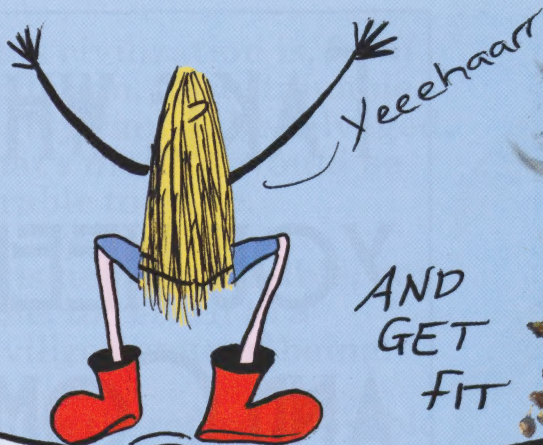
MORE RANDOM TIPS FROM THE URBAN GUERRILLA GARDENER

REMEMBER DONT PLANT TOO MUCH AT ONCE.

START SMALL



ENJOY THE FRESH AIR!



PLANT FLOWERS LIKE MARIGOLDS IN BETWEEN YOUR VEGETABLES. IT WILL LOOK GOOD AND WILL HELP TO PREVENT PESTS.



DONT GROW FANCY STUFF IT WILL ENCOURAGE THEFT AND AT WORST JEALOUSY.



DONT BE AFRAID TO TAKE CRITICISM



SOMETIMES IT'S GOOD ADVICE ("SOMETIMES")

YOU CAN ALWAYS BANG OUT SOME SABBATH SO YOU DONT AVE TO LISTEN TO BULL SHITE



TAKE WHAT YOU NEED AND COMPOST THE REST

AN INTRODUCTION TO
POST-CIVILIZED THEORY
BY MARGARET KILLJOY

Well, that civilization thing was interesting, now wasn't it? I mean, it certainly seemed worth a shot. We got a lot out of it: telescopes, wheelchairs, wikipedia. But we also just about took out the natural world. Science, agriculture, and specialization have done a lot for expanding cultural ideas and communication, but they've done even more for genocide and ecocide.

So it's time we gave up the noble, failed experiment altogether and moved on to something new.



Premise One: We Hate Civilization

This civilization is, from its foundation, unsustainable. It probably cannot be salvaged, and what's more, it would be undesirable to do so. When we're discussing civilization, we're discussing the entirety of the modern world's organizational structures and approaches to culture. We're talking about the legal and societal codes that dictate "proper" behavior. We're talking about the centralizing and expanding urges of political and economic empire.

Civilization is destroying all life on earth. It's unsustainable: growth-based economies and societies always are. Civilization is nigh unredeemable: there seems to be an infinitesimally slim chance that civilization will drop its resource over-consumption and move rapidly towards a sustainable way of existing. And even if it did, we don't want it. It would still be an imposition on our freedom.

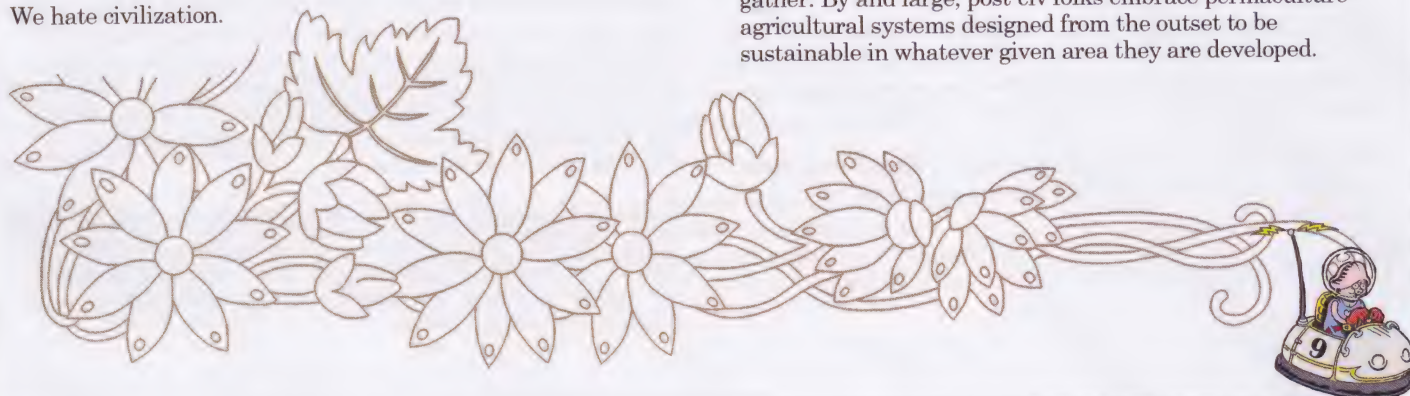
Civilization has been defined in all sorts of ways, but none of them actually make it sound very good when you think much about it. My dictionary defines civilization as "the stage of human social development and organization that is considered most advanced." Aside from being a sort of useless definition, this points out the prejudice inherent in civilization. It says: "We are advanced. You are primitive. What's more, history and development is purely linear in nature, progress only moves forward, and any deviation from the course we are on is regressive."

Another working definition of civilization can be derived from Wikipedia, which often provides the sort of cultural consensus on a given term. Wikipedia describes civilization as "a society defined as a complex society characterized by the practice of agriculture and settlement in cities ... Compared with less complex structures, members of a civilization are organized into a diverse division of labor and an intricate social hierarchy." This definition, too, points out the flaws in civilization. An intricate social hierarchy? Why have we all chosen a world that puts up with that kind of crap?

Derrick Jensen, an anti-civilization theorist (but not a post-civilized one), has proposed another useful definition of civilization: "a culture — that is, a complex of stories, institutions, and artifacts — that both leads to and emerges from the growth of cities (civilization, see civil: from civis, meaning citizen, from Latin civitatis, meaning city-state)." Which of course leads us to ask what, exactly, a city is. Derrick defines a city, for the purpose of his definition of civilization, as: "people living more or less permanently in one place in densities high enough to require the routine importation of food and other necessities of life."

And that, perhaps, is the point of all of this. If a place requires resources from elsewhere, everything is fine when they can trade for them. But when their farming neighbors experience a drought and can't provide a surplus for trade? Then you have war. Great.

We hate civilization.



Post-civilized thought rests on three simple premises:

One: This civilization is, from its foundation, unsustainable. It probably cannot be salvaged, and what's more, it would be undesirable to do so.

Two: It is neither possible, nor desirable, to return to a pre - civilized state of being.

Three: It is therefore desirable to imagine and enact a post - civilized culture.

Premise Two: We're Not Primitivists

It is neither possible, nor desirable, to return to a pre-civilized state of being. Most of the groundwork of anti-civilization thought — important work, mind you — has been laid down by primitivists. Primitivists believe, by and large, that humanity would be better served by returning to a pre-civilized way of life. This is not a view that we share.

Primitivists reject technology. We just reject the inappropriate use of technology. Now, to be fair, that's almost all of the uses of technology we see in the civilized world. But our issue with most primitivist theory is one of babies and bathwater. Sure, most technologies are being put to rather evil uses — whether warfare or simple ecocide — but that doesn't make technology ("The application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes.") inherently evil. It just means that we need to completely re-imagine how we interact with machines, with tools, even with science. We need to determine whether something is useful and sustainable, rather than judging things purely on their economic or military value.

Primitivists reject agriculture. We simply reject monoculture, which is abhorrent and centralizing, destroys regional autonomy, forces globalization on the world, and leads to horrific practices like slash-and-burn farming. We also reject other stupid ideas of how to feed humanity, like setting 6 billion people loose in the woods to hunt and gather. By and large, post-civ folks embrace permaculture: agricultural systems designed from the outset to be sustainable in whatever given area they are developed.

Primitivists have done a good job of exploring the problems of civilization, and for this we commend them. But, on the whole, their critique is un-nuanced.

What's more, the societal structure they envision, tribalism (note that what our society's view of what tribalism is, is mostly based on faulty, Eurocentric anthropology), can be socially conservative: What many tribes lacked in codified law, they made up for with rigid "customs," and one generation is born into the near-exact way of life as their predecessors.

We cannot, en masse, return to a pre-civilized way of life. And honestly, most of us don't want to. We refuse a blanket rejection of everything that civilization has brought us. We need to look forward, not backwards.

We are not primitivists.

Premise Three: We Are Post-Civilized

It is therefore desirable to imagine and enact a post-civilized culture. This is something we can do here and now in the thrashing endgame of civilization.

There are so many false dichotomies in the world. The amateur and the professional musician both have so much to offer, and we post-civilized folks generally cultivate both specialized and generalized skills. Someone has got to get good at lens grinding — and optometry — but that doesn't mean you shouldn't be able to cook a decent meal, or help weed your neighbour's garden.

One of civilization's greatest faults is its attempt to homogenize a global culture, to spread one set of ideas of how everything — from governance to architecture to agriculture to music — must be done "properly." But if you build flat-roofed houses in cold climates, snow is going to build up and your roof is going to collapse. If you fell trees from a hillside the same as you do in the valleys, your soil is going to erode.

So moving towards post-civilization — with or without industrial collapse — is a matter of looking around oneself, one's community, and one's landbase, and determining what is appropriate. What this means is that, in the here and now, there are parts of civilized culture we can utilize to our benefit that we might not be able to two generations after a collapse. For those in the first world, our most abundant resource is trash.

Good food can be rescued and eaten. Rotten food can be composted and used to build raised bed gardens atop otherwise poisonous city soil. Paper that is blank on one or both sides can be bound into notebooks. Other paper can be pulped in a blender, spread onto screens, and pressed with a re-purposed hydraulic car jack. Roadkill can be skinned and butchered. Electric toys can be scavenged, their circuit boards and motors re-purposed. Used vegetable oil can be rescued out of grease traps and used to power our cars or even our generators.

And the critics will say this can't work forever, and they'll look confused when we nod our heads in agreement. Because we'll adapt with the shifting landscape, because what works in one time or place may not work elsewhere or elsewhen.

Civilization thinks that culture naturally trickles down from the civil to the savage, from the urban to the rural. We don't.

We are post-civilized.



If We Had Our Way

What does a city look like if it's not a city anymore? The concept of the city, as an entity of its own with specified boundaries, centralized government, and the routine importation of necessities, must be done away with. But we're not all going to scatter out into the surrounding countryside, oh no.

The post-civilized city (Non-city? Urban area? Terminology is a bit hard) might look like a city if you ignored its government. The society would consist of smaller groups that retain their individual identities but are capable of working together for the common good.

We post-civilized people aim to prove that decentralization of our culture, economies, and politics is both possible and desirable. Every smaller group (some might use the word tribe, but I personally shy from it) would make its own decisions, maintain its autonomy, and solve problems in the ways that suit its constituency. Some might turn to high technology to meet their needs and desires. Others might live more simply. But the borders between the groups will most likely be blurred, with individuals, groups, and families moving between social spheres. Honestly, it would socially be much like today, if you removed the hierarchy between groups and actively avoided the centralizing influence of civilized culture.

Will these groups ever fight? Probably. No system is perfect, and it is better to admit that forthrightly than pretend it is otherwise. We paint no utopia here. But there have been movements in the past that have developed political structures to allow groups with diverse interests to interact peacefully. One of those movements that we are influenced by is syndicalism.

Syndicalism is an economic system totally outside of the capitalist/state-socialist dichotomy. It suggests that a federation of collectivized trade unions might promote mutual aid between members. For a bit of history of when syndicalism successfully functioned in a developed nation, look into the Spanish Civil War.

Mutual aid, then, is the opposite of competition. Wikipedia describes it as "the economic concept of voluntary reciprocal exchange of resources and services for mutual benefit." One of the earliest anarchists — and evolutionary biologists — was Peter Kropotkin, who advocated against Darwin's suggestion that nature was simply the war of one against all. Instead, he argued, intra-species cooperation is at least as much an evolutionary force as competition. What's more, modern science has finally come around and has begun to believe him.

Now, we're not exactly syndicalists, either. Syndicalism is a lovely idea, but we're not talking about trade unions, and we're not talking about industrialization. We should cling to the tenants of historical anarchism no more than we should cling to second-wave feminism, or, for that matter, civilization. No, we're talking about dynamic groups of people coming together organically to make the few decisions that would impact the non-city at large.

We're talking about the steampunks over here perfecting solar distilleries by use of Fresnel lenses while another group of bike enthusiasts over there spends their time racing, doing courier work for other groups, and forging bicycles out of found pipe. A semi-nomadic clique of teenagers will move out into the wilds of the abandoned suburbs and herd goats, while a hermit whiles her time growing potatoes in stacked tires and recording classical piano onto wax cylinders.

Someone is going to wire up his Super Nintendo to a solar panel array, and folks from all walks of life are going to come over to play Street Fighter, or just to watch. We're all going to grow most of our own food, and we're all going to deal with our own trash, wash our own dishes.

The Collapse

And of course, if we had it our way we would move past civilization as peacefully as possible, as non-destructively as possible. We would organize from the bottom up. We'd present solutions that are so reasonable that those in power with ethics will join us and those without ethics will see their economic might dwindle away as more people refuse to participate in civilized exchange.

But this isn't likely, to be honest. Our society is on a collision course with history. It's possible that the only question is which will collapse first: industrial civilization or the earth's ability to sustain human life. If that's the case, then we'd better hope (or act) for the former.

The collapse of industrial civilization, if it comes, will be horrible. Not one of us, not even those of us who secretly or openly long for the apocalypse, will enjoy it. But contrary to Hollywood lies, the best in people often comes out in crisis. Nothing brings a neighbourhood together like a blackout; nothing gets people to sharing like food shortages. (What, you thought we'd all hoard our food and then duke it out with shotguns, kill or be killed, neighbours setting fire to one another's houses? Humans don't always do that. What do you think we are, civilized?)

But if our economy doesn't give way, and we don't figure out cold fusion (as well as a massive re-stocking of the world's oceans), we'll face something much, much worse. Ecological collapse will shatter the world as we know it. If any of us are alive when the dust has cleared, nothing will be the same.

We need to be done with civilization as soon as possible, lest civilization destroy us all.

In The Meantime

We want to not be civilized any longer. It's time to move on. We want to reject crazy hierarchies and delusional economics, colonialism and nation-states. But it just so happens that we aren't given much of a chance to opt out. Civilization has never, not once in its history, allowed room for those who aren't civilized to flourish. It's to the degree that you might think this a defining characteristic of civilization: civilization is so afraid of being wrong that it simply cannot abide by others who live in other fashions.

And even if we did successfully opt out, that wouldn't stop civilization from destroying the earth.

But let's be optimists again for a second. The earth is going to die or the earth is not going to die. Civilization is going to fall, or civilization is not going to fall. What are we going to do, here and now, in our lives?

I don't want to get into how one might get involved in the epic battle to save the earth, destroy civilization, to prevent or promote the collapse of this or that. Those are the sorts of ethical choices that one must make for oneself.

But I will encourage that you find or develop a post-civilized lifestyle. In a way, it's easy. Close your eyes, and imagine who you would be without social constraints. What would you do if you were dependent upon only yourself, your friends, and the resources you can find around yourself. What would you wear? What would you eat? Perhaps the more important questions are subtler: how would you treat your friends? How would you like to be treated?

In the here and now, we learn survival skills: Skinning and tanning and wire-stripping, archery and gunpowder-making. Herbalism and acupuncture, yes, but we also study the application (and making) of antibiotics, methods of surgery and dentistry. We permaculture, we re-wild, and we scavenge the urban, suburban, and rural landscapes alike, learning what it means to be sustainable in a dying world. We tear up our lawns and leave only gardens. Of course, one day, we're going to tear up the pavement and leave only bike paths.

We practise community responses to problems within our subculture, like how to deal with physical and sexual assault without involving the police. We learn about trauma (the hard way, most of the time) and how to deal with it. We keep chickens and ducks. We eat dandelions and cattails.

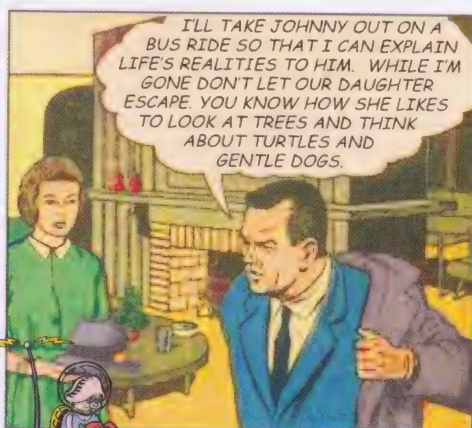
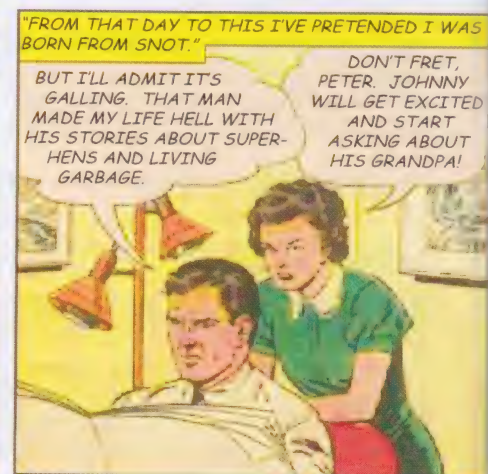
We live, as much as we can, as though civilization were a blight that is behind us already. And this, more than any writing, will be our propaganda. Because yes, you can live this way. And yes, it is better. A meal means so much more when you grow or gather it yourself, and friends are so much closer when they're treated as equals. Feral in a tailcoat, that's us. When we look at the world around us, we take what we need and compost the rest.



WHO AMONG US
CAN OCCUPY OUR
VALUABLE TIME
CONSIDERING THE
ACTIVITIES
AND INTERESTS
OF

JOHNNY VIABLE

by STEVE AYLETT

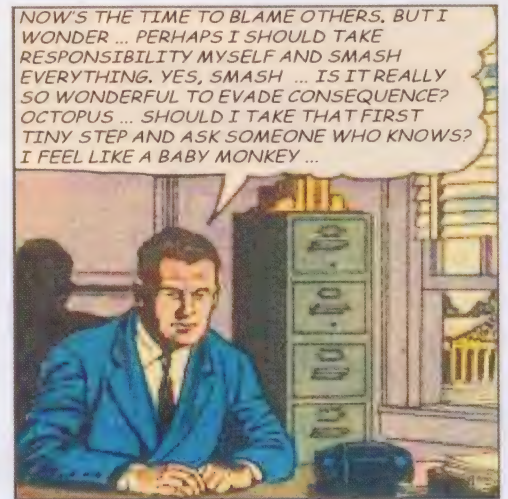
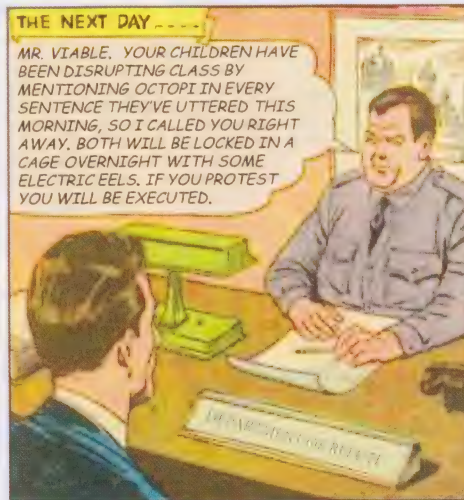


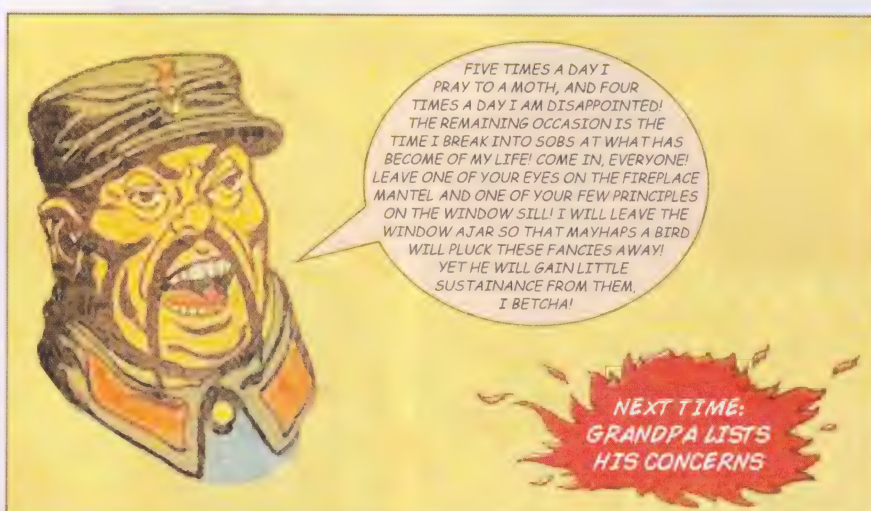
"AND HE AFFECTED NOT ONLY ME, BUT EVERYONE IN THE WORLD WITH HIS BRIGHT IDEAS AND CONSTANCY, HIS ABSOLUTE CONVICTION THAT HE WANTED TO CONSIDER THIS AND THAT, WHILE NOT KICKING STRANGERS WITHOUT REASON, AND LOOKING FIRST UP AT THE SKY, THEN AT THE GROUND, WHILE SOMETIMES SINGING A HAPPY TUNE, AND AT OTHER TIMES HUMMING NO PARTICULAR TUNE AT ALL - AND ALL THE WHILE, WINKING AT ME IN A SCAMPISH WAY AS IF EVERYTHING WAS ALL RIGHT."





YET THE MIND OF A BOY IS A STRANGE, RUBBERIZED THING, NOT EASILY CURTAILED BY ILL-PLANNED DISTRACTIONS, INEXPENSIVE FRIPPERIES OR THE TUNELESS WHISTLING OF A PASSING WHORE.





ALL TOMORROW'S PARTIES...

...should be as spectacular as the Dodgem Logic Launch, celebrated at Northampton's Monk's Park Workingmen's Club on November 26th, 2009. The drinks are on us so sit back and watch the action courtesy of the evening's only sober individual, our designated daguerreotype driver, photographer James Thorpe.

There was a warm glow in the precision-ground lenses of Mitch Jenkins' eyes as he surveyed the fabulous throng, which included such longstanding comrades as the ever-elegant Jazz Butcher or the surely preserved-by-voodoo Alex Novak, and remarked 'It's as if the last thirty years never happened.' The timeless treat in question was the DODGEM LOGIC launch, a wonderland of inflatable fruit with colour-shifting eggs illuminating every table, as arranged by our doyenne of decoration Tamsyn Paine and her team of special-forces stylists. In a venue tricked out with the psychedelic hoardings of a groovy Gary Ingham some two hundred Dodgem darlings and their loved ones stuffed their shining, greedy faces with a gourmet vegetarian feast provided by SESAME SHEFFIELD (official caterers to the revolution), bathed in the swoony sound system of Andy Skank and twitched like electrocuted jellyfish to the evening's hallucinatory entertainments.

The spree kicked off with an unfathomable acapella rendition of Living on a Prayer by the night's M.C, comedy hate-monkey Jake Moore, then soared to the sublime heights offered by troubadour Winston Echo and his moving tales of doomed love at the bureau de change. Before the stunned crowd could recover they were submerged in a luscious tsunami of female flesh and feathers as this issue's cover stars took to the stage: Miss Lulli Blue, Miss Khandie Khisses (in and out of her gorilla suit), Miss Nicole A. Lure and the divine Darkteaser transported the audience to a better place before surrendering the spotlight to Northampton's finest, parallel universe popsters The Retro Spankees, joined for their finale by the soothing presence of Downtown Joe Brown and the sheer spirit-crushing authority of The Beloved Leader.

Sinister revenants like Kevin O'Neill and Savage Pencil rubbed shoulders with Calluz, Claire Ashby, our design desperadoes The Wallace Boys and the clotted cream of the town's music scene. Har-Q and Ill'uzion turned up looking all gangsta but left, beaming like nine-year olds, with an inflatable banana. Even the unearthly Steve Aylett seemed as if the outside world had for once meshed seamlessly with his nightmarish inner landscape, and I think last issue's cover maven Tamara Rogers said her boyfriend had proposed to her during the evening. It could all have been a strange and wonderful dream, if we didn't have these compromising pictures...





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WORLD OF ILLUZION

By lejorne pindling

Drink Big.



Living in the UK is great when it comes to food isn't it? At the moment we are a country of fast food junkies and Tesco "Value" range slaves. Cheap food seems to be something which people are desperate to have, and the unfortunate thing is that the FSA (Food Standard Agency) doesn't give a shit about what any of these manufacturers actually puts in our food!!

Currently, with some of the whacky laws that they have (or sometimes do not have) based on what should or shouldn't be in food, I think it's important that we carefully select the foods we consume. It is no surprise that a lot of the questionable ingredients that are in the food tend to be when you go for the cheaper option, as many families, students and older people do.

Fortunately for us the FSA have given us a tool to help regulate our own food (as they seem to lack either the ability or motivation to) in the handy form of the ingredients list, that more recently due to vegetarians and people with allergies, has to be slightly more clear in exactly what is in our food no matter how gruesome.

So for example, there's nothing wrong with tinned hot-dogs..... is there? A favourite for a lot of young people everywhere, largely expected to be made of pork. However with the use of the word "dog" it has actually allowed manufacturers to use another meat. Don't worry though, Rover isn't being turned into tinned sausages — but chicken is!! To be clear, this isn't ordinary chicken (not breast, thigh, leg or wing) its MRM chicken!!

The lovely term MRM stands for Mechanically Recovered Meat. Long story short, after the good cuts of meat have been taken off the animal, the carcass which is now sinew, gristle, bones and connective tissue, is squeezed through a machine. What you're left with is a thick slurry of pink mass which is lovingly titled MRM (mmmmmm). Don't worry though, MRM isn't just used in hot dogs, there are a number of products which contain the stuff. If you want to see an MRM machine in action just log on to YouTube.

The great thing is that it doesn't just stop with hot dogs, it continues through to burgers, with some containing 31% beef hearts. BEEF HEARTS!!! I mean if you're at home and you decide to make some burgers you don't automatically reach for a beef heart do you? Burgers can also contain cow cheeks according to the FSA: however they have to be de-haired and if they're attached to the nose then it's a no-no - good call, FSA!



Some chicken kiev's out there only contain 19% worth of chicken, which is a joke considering that chicken kiev is supposed to be a chicken breast with garlic butter in the middle coated with breadcrumbs. This isn't a surprise though because "chicken kiev" is not regulated by the FSA, so I imagine that as long as it looks like a Kiev and contains at least a little bit of chicken, some garlic and breadcrumbs (not necessarily on the outside) then it's fine. What they also don't tell you is that the chicken has been raised in some other country and then pumped with water and salt, until it's 60% chicken, 30% water and 10% salt, but due to the FSA's regulations, no-one has to tell you that they have put water in the chicken because they haven't altered its appearance. Next time you are in Tesco, have a look at the value range kiev and then the finest range.

To be honest I could continue as there are so many things that are in food which would turn your stomach but I have limited space and besides I wouldn't want to put you off whatever you are having for lunch. At least the supermarkets are clearly displaying what's in their products, unlike burger vans, fast food takeaways and restaurants.

If you ask me, we were better off when we were rearing and killing our own animals, because at least we knew what the hell we were cooking. Oh well, c'est la vie - however, the next time you tuck into a burger and you discover a white chewy bit which doesn't appear to be burger, I implore you to think about what part of the cow that was, as I will place bets that it may well be part of a cheek.

Happy Eating!!



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Ritten Galaless Bitch

*The
Burleekeew*

From the broken-bulb flea-pit haunts of the serial masturbator to the new face of both female empowerment and Virgin Airlines, Burlesque has had quite a ride. Dodgem Logic's sovereign of sauciness *Melinda Gebbie* charts its wayward course to an accompaniment of snare drums, catcalls and the mesmerising imagery of globally adored local lensman *Mitch Jenkins*. BRING ON THE GIRLS...

When I was a bit of naive beef at the juicy age of 18, my opportunist then-lover of 34 forbade me to enter an amateur burlesque contest which was to be staged at the near-demise of the great Fox Warfield Theatre on Market Street in San Francisco. How I longed to traipse that battered stage as one of the last in a magnificent and earthy conga line of Jezebels, Birds of Paradise and Goodtime Gals. Instead, I was instructed to ready the spare room for a Sexual Freedom League party by laying out mattresses, painting the light-bulbs orange or red and making sandwiches for the advent of over 30 paired strangers who would descend on our Potrero Hill condo looking to play genital bingo. Soon after that party I left the guy who'd so rudely foisted his own lurid tastes on my sexually romantic internal landscapes. But my sense of romance, mystery, bathos and pathos around the stage life of a semi-nude woman remained intact, untouched by the wily and outright vulgar habits of the thrill-seeking 1970s.

Even as a child I used to practise a stripper routine to the then-unique boom-boom musical stylings of David Rose and his orchestra, made famous in the early '60s with *The Stripper*. Something about the wa-wa in that kind of tempo would start me imagining a beautiful, earthy woman gliding a graceful two-step in tiny bejewelled shoes, her legs like shapely art nouveau tree limbs, alabaster or gleaming bronze torso twinkling and shining in beads or satin, feathers or bows, her arms making lifting shapes... I have always considered burlesque to be the origin of ballet.

In my mid-twenties I accompanied two dear male friends to see Chesty Morgan, the woman with the 76-inch bust. I went along out of both sympathy and curiosity, remembering the PLAYBOY joke: 'Have you heard about Chesty Morgan and her massive bust?' 'No. What does she do?' 'She crawls around on stage and tries to stand up.' At this point in time, 1976 or so, I was the only female in the audience.

A beautiful, carefully-coiffed woman came out from the shadows in this small theatre. Slender-legged, small-boned and softly spoken, she stayed on stage after a brief tour of its parameters, where she reclined carefully on a chaise longue with her head and gleaming tresses lain upside down and her gargantuan mammaries nearly covering her face, twinkling in a net of beaded whisper-thin nylon. Taking her time to stand erect once more, she took questions from the audience.

'Does your husband come to your gigs?'

'No, not really,' she replied in careful English. 'He is a major league baseball player and he is very busy but he has come once or twice.'

'Where are you from?'

'I came over from Hungary as a little girl.'

'Do you have a daughter?'

'Yes.'

'Does she have a bust like yours?'

'It may be that she will when she is fully grown.'

At this point I felt sorry for the lonely-looking woman standing defenceless on the little dark stage. I raised my hand. Her face brightened.

'Yes? It is so nice to see a lady in the audience. What is your question?'

'I just want to say that I know, having a large bust myself, that despite what men may think carrying all this around every day sometimes makes my back hurt.'

'I would guess it's the same for you, although you make it look easy. You are very graceful and I feel lucky to have seen your show.'

She thanked me, and I felt I cheered her up a little bit.




*Black
Bird
The
Book*

*Ruby
Lace*







A few months later I went to the actual closing night of the Fox Warfield Theatre, an old-time glory days place that could have and may have housed one or two operas in its day, although the great days of the old cinema were considered as high-tone as going to the opera once upon a time. Its thick, heavy velvet curtains and metallic gold tassels still looked rich and kingly from the audience. The lounge seats were still covered in industrial velvet, even if they were a bit worn. There was an orchestra pit where, in the 1930s, live music would have played at the intermission, before the curtains opened and before the newsreels and cartoons were unveiled. Gilded balcony seats were placed in neat art deco rows and the upstairs seats were cordoned off by a velvet rope.

Everyone there was mourning the passage of a glorious theatrical tradition. Some sat scheming as to how they might cut a tassel to take home for remembrance. There was an orchestra that night. The conductor stood while the timpani, violins and woodwinds peeped, boomed and squealed and then the lush dancing music began.

The first act was the one I remember most vividly. A spry and wiry woman with grey hair came out into the yellow spotlight absolutely naked, attended by a well-muscled young man who appeared to be her junior by about fifty years. Subtle, romantic music washed over them and in a state of entranced disbelief I watched riveted as this fading dancer applied the loveliest of classical ballet moves to a pas de deux. She did not fail once. Her body seemed to be able to intertwine effortlessly with that of her partner, even without the aid of shoes. She was absolute magic. The audience applauded in astounded appreciation. She changed my attitude about the ageing process forever.

For a few months I worked on PLAYGIRL magazine in Los Angeles. Friends took me to see a strip venue somewhere out of town where we could grab a nice meal of sushi, which was scarcer then, it being 1982. It was an intriguing line-up that night at the "Off-Vegas". First on was tall Nordic blonde who danced under a bright ultra-violet spot. Removing her black frilly bra and then her panties, she proceeded to squeeze tubes of fluorescent green, orange, red and

pink paint tubes onto a palette. She then brushed flowers onto her breasts with these concoctions and pressed pieces of paper onto them, giving these rather spectacular mementos to an eager audience made up of a mix of dressed-up couples and single men on their way home via a bit of nightlife.

The starring act was none other than the adorable Kitten Natividad, diminutive star of many films by Russ Meyer, the king of mammary romance who used up many reels of film just following the exploits of unhindered breast tissue at work and at play. Kitten was featured at this venue inside a delightful see-through fishbowl-like bathtub where bubbles only partially hid her cute little form. Offstage she was very sweet. She answered questions with an appealing south-of-the-border accent, and when asked if she and Russ were still friends (they had divorced by this time) she smiled a lovely gleaming pink grin and said "Russ and I will always be friends. He is a very life-loving man." Awww!

Either she claimed that they still did gardening together or I simply imagined the two of them digging tulips, she in a gingham short-shorts playsuit and he wearing nowt but a camera.

Moving on in time to 1985, I had now found myself living in London. Working for Tuppy Owens on her Sex Maniac's Diary. I had been asked to take photographs at a stag party up north. This was part one of a two-part photo op, which also included a male striptease at a hen night. The hen night was stickier for me, as I made the unfortunate decision to belt a few before the stage act began. I danced out into the spotlight with the male dancer and before I knew it he'd thrown me down and sprayed me completely with whipped cream.

The stag night was a bit more like a David Lynch film without the budget. It included a sweating compere and two single mums who went through their paces, professional but quick, before the pale, zombie-like males, each at a table by himself, could do anything raw. Both sat on a couple of laps, which surprised the attendees, which surprised me. Backstage, the girls making up in the toilets and the compere were all talking about the girl who came on last. Sybil was her name. She was known for her insatiable appetites, often taking on whole parties full of guys as her final act. Everyone was terrified of her. I took a few photographs, which of course I can't show you, and our crew left before her final curtain.

Which brings us up to the ladies featured in our photo-shoot. Burlesque has come a long way, baby, since the early days of Lillian Russell and her laced-up soft look, or even from the intoxicating Sally Rand, a woman who danced at the Chicago State Fair of nineteen-oh-something in nothing more than bubbles and feathers. But at a recent burlesque review held at local venue the Fish Market here in Noho, I had the privilege of watching, with sheer joy, the unique and individual charms of three outstanding ladies of Burlesque, Misses Luli Blue, Khandie Khisses and Darkteaser who, at last, unlike at any other Burlesque event I have attended, were playing to a squealing, cheering audience of almost 98% women, the two men there looking surprised but not unhappy. I leave you to judge for yourselves their individualistic and ample charms. Take it away, Ladies.





Kitten Goddess Bitch

The Burlesque

PHOTOGRAPHER

Mitch Jenkins

ART DIRECTION & DESIGN

Paul Chessell

RETOUCHING

Paul Norman @ Invisible Inc

PHOTOGRAPHER'S ASSISTANTS

Steve Hardman

Leo Williams

Matt Easton

Hair & Make Up
Jo Bull

Hair & Make Up Assistant
Poppy Armitage

CLOWN

Mike Porter

MAN

Pat Fish

The Girls

Luli Blue

Khandie Khisses

Darkteaser

THE EASTERN EUROPEAN ORGAN TRADER

Alan Moore

The Madame
Melinda Gebbie

MR INFERNO IN COCKTAILS WITH SATAN

SWEET! I'VE RECENTLY
TAKEN TO SWIGGIN' MY OWN
URINE, PURELY FOR MEDICINAL
PURPOSES DON'T CHA KNOW!
LEMME PUMP YOU OUT
A FRESH FOAMING
PINT! AAHHHHH!

HMM... SEEMS TO BE
A MITE BLOODY THIS
MORNING!

I'LL
HAVE WOT
YR HAVIN?
MATHERS!

WHY IF IT
ISN'T MY
FAITHFUL
SERVANT...

MR INFERNO!
WOT'S
YR SON
POIN' AT?
YUNK?

HEREY'GO
NOW DON'T LET IT
GO COLD!

FURSSHOOGLE!

FUKIT! DOWN
THE HATCH!

BTMS
ZUP?

WELL

ITE
SURS
PACK!
AK HIC

DRINK THE JUICE OF SATAN

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE STRANGE

YOU'VE READ THE LEGENDS, HEARD THE GHOST STORIES, SEEN THE ALIEN BIG CATS ... NOW STEVE MOORE TAKES A LOOK BACK AT SOME OF THE COUNTY'S REALLY ODD STUFF ...

One morning in July 1996, Peter Doden was walking his dog in Wakerley Woods, near Corby, when the unruly pooch slipped its lead and dashed off. When he eventually caught up, the dog was barking its head off and looking up into a tree, where an elderly gentleman was sitting astride one of the branches. Doden duly wished the man good morning. "Yes, it is," replied the old gent. "Have you a spare sandwich or anything?"

According to the *Daily Telegraph*, all Mr Doden had about him was a bar of chocolate, which he tossed up to the old man, who promptly devoured it in its entirety, including the wrapper, before confessing that he'd been in the tree for a fortnight. He had, apparently, set out to join a band of eco-campaigners in Sussex who were occupying trees to prevent them being cut down to make way for a new road, but when he got as far as Wakerley Woods he'd felt rather tired and decided to lodge his protest in the tree where Doden had found him instead. The latter felt obliged to point out that Sussex was 150 miles to the south and that, in any case, the tree-protesters were long gone. "Damn it all," replied the elderly gent. "They might have told me!"

Maybe there's just something weird about Wakerley Woods, especially if your name's Peter. One Peter Wilson wrote to *Fortean Times* in July 2004, to recount his own experience there three years earlier, when he was walking in the wood with his wife. It was a calm, sunny day, and his wife stopped about ten yards ahead of him in the shade of the pines, asking if he could hear anything. At first he couldn't, but realising she was a little spooked, he eventually managed to "tune in" what she was hearing, which was a very low, dull throb that he described as a sort of pervasive underground heartbeat. It was rhythmical, unpleasant and they seemed to sense it with their entire bodies, rather than just hearing it; and they got the impression that whatever was causing the vibration was so massive that it seemed to spread through both the ground and the surrounding air. And yet they were too far away from any roads to hear any traffic noise, which wouldn't have accounted for the periodic throbbing of the sound anyway. So maybe something very large and bad-tempered was humming away to itself in Wakerley Woods after all ...

As that reliable organ of serious news, *The Sun*, reported in 1995, Mark Merrifield of Rushden was 21 when he lost his right thumb while using a meat cutter at the abattoir where he worked. Curiously, his 48-year-old father, Martin, had also lost his right thumb at the age of 21, as a result of an accident with a metal grinding machine. No one giving the thumbs up in the Merrifield family, then ...

And on the subject of accidents, Mark Rockingham, aged 12, met with a bizarre one in March 1997, according to *The Guardian* and various other newspapers. He's believed to have been reaching into a cupboard at his home in Kettering when he lost his balance and fell forward across the open front of a dishwasher. Unfortunately, he fell across the cutlery basket, where a knife had been left with its blade pointing upwards. The knife sliced through an artery in his chest, and he died in hospital before the bleeding could be stopped.





A rather luckier escape back in 1912, when *Lloyd's Weekly News* carried a story about a detective who, investigating a burglary at a hardware shop in Northampton, chased the suspect, but then lost him in the back-streets. Not much changed there, then. Returning to the scene of the crime, though, he noticed several items in the shadows above him, hanging from hooks. Apparently by coincidence, one of the heaviest of the objects fell, just as the detective passed underneath. It was the blade of a scythe, but this time the Grim Reaper was having something of a laugh ... it only chopped off his ear.

It would have saved a lot of trouble if someone had just called out: "Duck!" But no one did, so pub landlord Raymond Charman of Corby took off his £500 gold wrist-watch while he was washing his car, back in August 1991. It was, of course, eaten by a passing duck, according to the *Sunday Mail*, which immediately flew away, never to be traced. Or maybe someone should have yelled: "Watch out!"

As if the ducks weren't bad enough, you have to watch out for the owls around here, too. Back in 1928, the *Daily Chronicle* reported that Mr Louis Linnett of Luton was motorcycling between Wollaston and Grendon, when he was savagely attacked by an owl. Being back in the days before compulsory crash-helmets, the owl pulled out his hair and slashed his cheek with its beak and claws. Abandoning the bike, Linnett left the road and ran to a hedge, blinded by blood, where he beat off another two attacks, as the owl now began biting his fingers as well. By the time it eventually flew away, he was too exhausted to move, and had to be rescued by a passing motorist.

Still, sometimes the birds don't have it all their own way. Consider the following idyllic scene: farmer Duncan Tesloss was driving his tractor across one of his fields at Polebrooke in March 1987 when a flock of Canada Geese flew over ... at least, it was idyllic until there was a yellow flash and the leading goose crashed to the ground, instantly deceased. "It looked like a laser-beam had struck it," he told the *Daily Express*. "The bird just stopped dead in its tracks." The bird was found to have a hole in its back, and two exit-wounds in its breast, but this apparently wasn't some kind of secret weapons test ... the goose was actually believed to have been struck by a meteor, in mid-flight. As for the chances of that happening ... well, they're astronomical!

So, there you are ... a poor, innocent copper beech tree, which has been happily growing in the village graveyard for 200 years or more, and suddenly someone comes along and murders you, for no apparent reason. The victim was in Barby, just this side of the Northamptonshire border from Rugby, and according to the *Rugby Advertiser* in November 1983, someone came along in the night and hammered several short lengths of metal pipe into its trunk, before pouring in poisonous chemicals through them. The vicar, the police and local forestry officials all agreed that the perpetrator knew exactly what he, she or it was doing, but no one was ever caught, and the reason for the arboricide remains unknown to this day.

A strange occurrence at Islip, reported by the *Daily Express* in 1919. There was a sudden loud noise like an explosion, and a basket full of clothes shot high into the air without any apparent reason. After a while, the clothes came down again, but no one could ever offer an explanation. Sometimes the world is simply baffling ...

Okay, time to really head back into the past, to bring you yesterday's news today! In May 1749, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, carried a report from the Reverend Philip Doddridge ... the well-known Non-Conformist minister whose church still stands in Spring Boroughs, Northampton. He reported that a clergyman's wife in his neighbourhood who had never previously had either an ear or a voice for music, fell into a "short frenzy" after giving birth, and sang "several fine tunes which her sister had learned in her presence some time before, and of which she seemed to take no particular notice." A lot of people tend to regard having kids as a bit of a headache ... this seems to have been completely the opposite!

The perils of being a llama-farmer in Northamptonshire ... Graham Bailey, 62, fell in a rabbit-hole on his farm at Loddington, in October 2003, and fractured his hip. According to *The Times*, it then took him two hours to crawl a hundred yards to a nearby road, where a passer-by heard him calling and phoned for help. Unfortunately his four large and fiercely-protective llamas then intervened, taking turns to chase away police and paramedics and prevent him receiving any treatment. Bailey was eventually picked up by a helicopter air-ambulance and whisked away to hospital ... and the llamas still chased after him, even when he was airborne.

So you've come all this way and you think you'd like a ghost story after all? Well, try this fairly non-traditional one, reported, surprisingly, by the *Sunday Times* of South Africa in November 1978. Steve Mikloz and his 17-year-old bride Debbie moved into their new flat in Raunds, on their wedding night; and naturally enough, before too long they got into bed and put the light out. It was then that Debbie realised they weren't alone, and a few seconds later so did Steve, as an invisible something grabbed him by the throat and dragged him out of the bed, gasping for breath. It need hardly be said that after that the couple got dressed and left the flat, refusing to return. A spokesman for the landlord was adamant that the flat wasn't haunted, however, declaring that: "The disturbance must have come from the flat next door." Pretty rowdy neighbours, I guess ...



Eat to the heart



On the Menu this month:

A Love Portion

No apologies for the selection of puns associated with this edition's recipes. This is an easy dessert to make, looks mouth-wateringly good and tastes fantastic. February is generally regarded as the last month of winter and often provides a final blast of snow or at least a serious 'cold front'. This recipe will bring a smile bright enough to shine through the death throes of winter and herald the summer to come. We all know that deep red hues enliven the mind and mood with love and passion and the tantalising flavours and scent of lemons will I'm sure also get your juices flowing!

It has the added bonus of being packed full of immune-system boosting Vitamin C, just what we all need to fend off the winter snuffles and fight off any not so nice lurgies associated with the 'kissing bug'... or glandular fever as it's known medically. You'll also be getting at least 2 of your 5-a-day portions... hence the portion in the title of the dish! The portion can also apply to the optional glug of warming spirit, which you can add to the fruit. I maintain a stock of packets of frozen berries (summer mix, raspberries, blueberries ~ cheaply available in the freezer section of the supermarkets and in bulk from Smith's Farm shops) and my man Michael does a champion job of collecting blackberries in the autumn just for treats such as this!

This really is a delectably sensuous way to complete a Valentines' meal or any meal where you want to share some love. This is a naughty but nice dish sent with love from me to you all.

By Wendi Jarrett

Ingredients

- 200g of frozen berry fruits (strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, blackcurrants, redcurrants, cherries)
- 1 tbsp. light brown sugar or caster sugar
- optional 2 tbsp. rum, brandy, kirsch or similar
- 8-12 sponge fingers
- 100g mascarpone
- 50g crème fraise or yoghurt
- 1 unwaxed lemon – washed, dried and ½ rind finely grated
- 1 egg – separated
- 1 tbsp icing sugar

Method

- First – place the fruits and brown sugar into a pan and gently heat until all the sugar is dissolved. Then you can either push the fruit mix through a sieve to remove all the pips and skins or leave as is to cool down completely. Add your spirit at this point and pour into a deepish dish / glass dish.
- Lightly push sponge fingers on top of fruit to absorb some of the juices and soften the fingers. Set aside in fridge.
- In a mixing bowl beat together the mascarpone, lemon rind, icing sugar and crème fraise.
- In a clean grease-free bowl, whisk the egg white to soft peaks then fold into the mascarpone.
- Spoon the mascarpone mix over the sponge fingers.
- Serves 2 ~ generous portions!



Fish with a Spanish twist

Despite England being an island, the average household eats fish less than twice a month. Without doubt some of that is down to our 'confidence' with preparing and cooking fish. Fish is genuinely one of the real fast foods and with the added bonus that most fish can be cooked straight from frozen. So the packets of fillets of fish can be bought for under £2.50 and often have half a dozen fillets!

Also cooking with fish is really quick - this dish takes around 15 minutes to cook from start to finish and to save time all the veg and seasonings can be prepared in advance and placed in covered containers / dishes / saucers in the fridge! The aromas really get the tastebuds going and the ease of this dish leaves you lots of time to lavish on your loved ones. *If you don't want to use Spanish chorizo sausage, leave it out and add 2 teaspoons of the wonderful dried, Spanish 'sweet' smoked paprika with the other seasonings.*

Ingredients

- 1 tbs of rapeseed oil
- 1 inch thick slice of Spanish chorizo sausage - cut up into small cubes
- ½ red pepper ~ washed and chopped small
- 2 med onions ~ chopped and lightly cooked (see microwave tip)
- 2 cloves of garlic ~ crushed / chopped finely
- 4 allspice seeds - crushed and ground
- 4 fillets from a pkt of frozen white fillets - cut into bite-size chunks
- tsp. of Caribbean fish seasoning (dill, ground fennel, sea salt)
- good grind of black pepper
- 2-4 tomatoes - chopped
- 1 medium tin of Cannellini beans - drained
- a squeeze of fresh lemon juice

optional: frozen prawns / squid / mussels - add these to dish in last 8 minutes of cooking with the other fish.

Method

I find my wok is the best pan to use to cook this dish in or a large reasonably deep non-stick frying pan.

- Place the oil in the pan on a medium heat, add the chopped up chorizo sausage and cook turning with a fish-slice for 2 minutes. The fat from the chorizo and some of the red smoky paprika flavouring will be released into the oil.
 - Add the peppers, onions, garlic and allspice and turn cooking for 2 minutes.
 - Next add the chopped white fish and the remaining seasonings and cook for a further 5 minutes on a lower heat.
 - Finally add the chopped tomatoes, drained beans, stir and allow to simmer for a further 5 minutes. (You can add any shellfish at this point too.)
 - Remove from heat and squeeze a generous amount of fresh lemon juice over the food.
- Serve with:
- Fresh crusty bread & salad leaves, olives, tomatoes, red onions, fresh herbs, etc.

Megadarra with love

This recipe is adapted from one I was introduced to by my dear Australian friend, Suzanne. She had taught in Libya and loved this dish, which is known there as Mudardara. When she came to England, she discovered the recipe in Claudia Roden's 'A New Book of Middle Eastern Food'. "This is the modern version of a medieval dish called mujadarra, described by al-Baghdadi as a dish of the poor, and still known today as Esau's favourite. In fact, it is such a great favourite that although said to be for misers, it is a compliment to serve it." From Claudia Roden's 'A New Book of Middle Eastern Food'

Suzanne gave her precious and wonderfully thumbled book to me because I so loved the dish too. I have cooked it, taught others how to cook it and added to it; as in this recipe. Despite its very simple and humble ingredients, it is an amazing tasting dish and has converted many a meat-lover and lentil-hater to wolf it down and return for more! This adaptation is further enriched by the addition of garlic and aubergines. Look at the bottom of the recipe for my handy and useful tips.

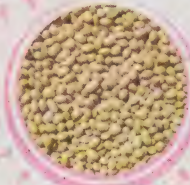
Ingredients

- 250g brown/ green or puy lentils (puy keep their shape more)
- 5 onions, chopped or sliced and cooked to transparent stage
- 4 cloves of garlic - crushed or chopped very small
- 1 medium sized aubergine - washed, dried and cubed.
- 175ml rapeseed oil or olive oil
- seasoning - a little salt, lots of freshly ground black pepper and a tsp. sugar

Method

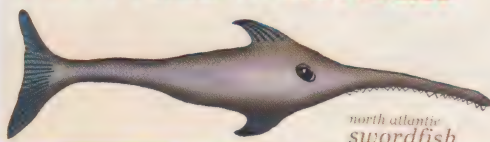
- Prepare the onions and garlic (see my tip*)
- Wash and drain the lentils, then boil in fresh water until just softened, about 10 minutes. Drain the lentils.
- Place the cooked lentils and onions together with seasoning and complete the cooking.
- If cooking in a saucepan, return to a low heat and cook for a further ½ hour.
- If using a slow-cooker set on LOW. Use a plug-in timer if you like, set to start when it suits you and for 1 hour - 1½ hrs before you wish to eat!
- Either combine the rice and lentils and serve as one or serve/ use separately.

Wendi's Tip: Part cook the onions/ garlic mix by placing them in a microwave proof dish or jug with two tablespoons of the oil. Cover with non-pvc cling film and microwave on full power for 5-10 minutes (depending on the power of your microwave). Onions should be soft and transparent. You can use them at this point or place in slow-cooker with the remaining oil and cook for 2 hours on low until nicely caramelised. Then continue as in step 3.



ANIMALS THAT COME WITH THEIR OWN CUTLERY

YOUR FREE WALLCHART



north atlantic swordfish



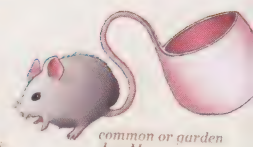
tasmanian forktoad



welsh condimentpig



red-plumose sporkfowl



common or garden ladlemouse (see them!)

daily

www.mustardweb.org



mustard

NORTHAMPTON EDITION



Ugly people to get better parking spaces

Less attractive people given special permits



Quincy Savage
Northampton

"It has long been accepted that beautiful people have more advantages in life," said councilman Joe Foyer last night. "We're just hoping to help address that balance in this one small way."

Mr Foyer was defending the local council's controversial new policy to issue unattractive people with special parking permits. The so-called 'help the homely' scheme provides a range of parking concessions for those people who are beautifully challenged.

Citizens issued with a *Genuinely Unattractive Resident Notification* (GURN) will be entitled to free

preferential parking spaces in the centre of town, permission to park on single yellow lines or, in extreme cases, allowed to park inside the building they are visiting.

"Unightly people are often denied access to the better nightclubs or breeding partners," said the councillor. "But now they will have preferential access to our many fine shops and local facilities".

The permit badges are required to be displayed in the windscreen of the car, and will prominently feature

"Beautiful people have more advantages in life, we're helping address the balance in one small way."

a photo of the owner. The degree of unattractiveness, and the associated level of permissions, would therefore be clear to parking wardens.

Overnight, council-approved 'No Handsomes' signs have appeared around the city centre, stating: 'If you are lucky enough to be deemed too attractive to park here, we will ask to see your GURN'.

Asked whether these new parking permits will clash with those given to disabled people, Mr Foyer shook his head: "Not at all, this is part of a integrated transport policy, and I'm happy to say we will be significantly upgrading all wheelchairs."

Asked to be more specific, Mr Foyer smiled broadly and said, "One word, folks: jetpacks."

Morrissey dancers

The new craze sweeping England

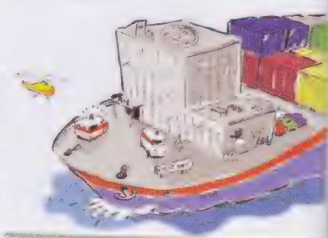
Culture



Britain sells NHS to America

Infrastructure to be shipped over on giant tankers

Health



"We shall never give in to your demands, no matter how reasonable!"

Opinion



News

Linguist discovers 'perfect' photo caption

Schoolbook caption hailed as 'lexical Holy Grail'



Emily Veganburger
Solihull

Flipping through one of his old school yearbooks, something caught the eye of Professor Wilf Cuthbertson; a photo of a pupil doing the long jump above the ineffectually humorous caption: 'Oh no, what a time to get diarrhoea!'.

"At first I just snorted derisively at how unfunny the caption was," said Cuthbertson. "However, there was something oddly intriguing about it, and I found I couldn't get the phrase out of my head."

Sitting at his writing desk by the window and ruminating over a glass of port, he began absent-mindedly scribbling the caption beneath other photos; first in the yearbook, then in the copy of *The Telegraph* balanced on his knee.

"It was a very peculiar thing," Cuthbertson explained. "Which-ever photo you wrote it under, the caption did not get any more – or any less – funny. It remained exactly the same level of feeble. In other words, the caption was linguistically perfect."

Anxious to confirm his discovery,

"Whatever photo you write it under, the caption does not get any more – or any less – funny"

he spent a sleepless night scrabbling through old newspapers and magazines and pulling illustrated books from his shelves. Ripping out the photos and drawings, he pinned them to his wall and taped the same caption beneath each one.

A photo of the moon landing: 'Oh no, what a time to get diarrhoea!', a still from *Casablanca*: 'Oh no,

what a time to get diarrhoea!', the London Philharmonic Orchestra playing Brahms Symphony No 3: 'Oh no, what a time to get diarrhoea!' Each time it had the same effect.

First thing next morning, Cuthbertson shared his discovery with a colleague: "It was clearly a semantic phenomenon," said Don Hinson. "A lexical Holy Grail, if you will."

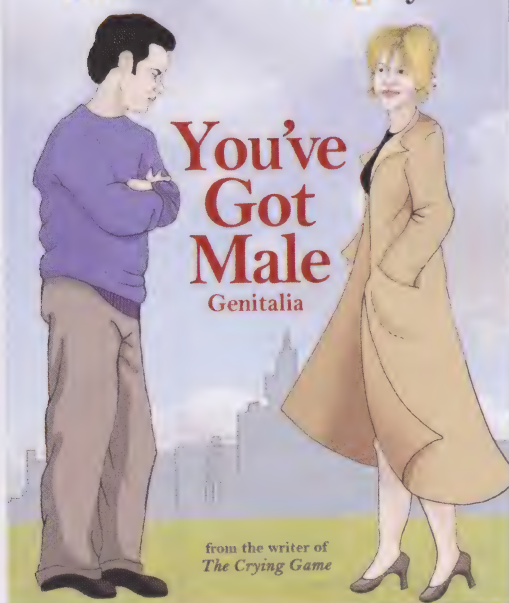
Plans were rushed into place and the professor triumphantly delivered his findings at yesterday's Annual Grammarians Conference. Although he did have to run out half way through to use the toilet. ■



Oh no, what a time to get diarrhoea!

Tom Hanks

Meg Ryan

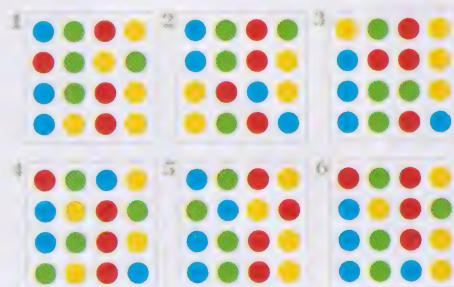


Puzzle corner

Travel Twister no 42

Left middle-finger green / right index-finger blue / right little-finger yellow / right ring-finger red / left index-finger yellow / left middle-finger green / right ring-finger blue / right little-finger red / left ring-finger blue.

Tie breaker: left thumb green.



Suddenly, the scales fell from my eyes (I had been weighing my eyebrows)...

Continuing our exclusive excerpts from *Derring Dos & Don'ts*, the memoirs of Col D John Coleman

Weekend magazine



log us into your interpod:



myface



spacehook



fritter



Stitch This!

Feejee Sock Mermaid

Hi, how
are you?

YOU WILL NEED

Two odd,
clean-ish socks
(steal them
from your enemies)

Two buttons
(small, beady
& eye-like)

Matted hair &
bellybutton fluff
(for stuffing)

Poking device
(for poking stuffing,
a dead biro works fine)

Needle 'n' thread

PATTERN



Short of a few quid? Then why not take a leaf out of P.T. Barnum's big book of money spinning ideas and exhibit your own miracle of nature to the sensation-hungry populace...

You can charge handsomely and the best bit is you don't have to spend years trawling for a real aquatic stunner when you can make your own with a couple of odd socks and a bit of fanning around.

The Feejee Mermaid (yup supposed to be spelt like that) is a well-loved standard of the Victorian freak-show scene but has its roots in the far east where bored sailors would take time out from rubbing boys down with gasoline to sew half an ape to a fishtail thus creating cheeky juju objects. This method is equally satisfactory and somewhat less grim.

Happy stitching rubes x

MRS. BROWN 2010

Keep those stitches nice and meaty
we are an evil Victorian taxidermist not a girl guide.

STAGE 1... THE EASY STUFF

Hack up your first sock as shown.
Get the body piece from the first sock and stuff it, nice and firm now.
Then sew up his poor little stumpless, eyeless torso to stop it all falling out.
Get the arm pieces and sew two tubes, inside out so your raw edges are hidden.
Turn them out the right way using the poking device but stop about halfway
so you get nice little fat paws which don't require any stuffing. Stitch them
to your body in the place where arms normally go.
Tail next, you will only need a little thin bit, roll it up and turn the raw
edge in, stitch along the length and sew it to his monkey butt.
So now we have a torso with arms and a tail - you can stop now if you are a
minimalist and enjoy your cuddly sock haggis.

Ears

Nose

You'll have a
bit shaped
like this

Cut along
the lines...

and make them up as follows...

Fold

Voila! Ear
Stitch it on
his head,
tuck in the
raw edges.

Fold

STAGE 2... THE FIDDLY BIT

Get your other sock and cut the toe off
(hopefully its a different colour so you can see
where to cut). This is your nose and ears.

Nose

Pull!

Sew round the edge in a circle
and gather it up to make a snout.
Stuff it and stitch it on.

Stuff

STAGE 3... THE FISHY BIT

Get the other sock and turn it inside out then sew along the line to make a long
pointy fishtail with the top of the sock as the waist-band. Cut off the spare
fabric and turn the tail the right way out. Give it a poke so its nice and pointy.

Get the last two pieces cut from other sock to make the tail fins. Sew them
inside out, turn through, give 'em a poke and sew in place (you could pretty
these up with a few buttons or a bit of extra stitching). His tail should just
pull on and off or you can sew it in place if it bothers you.

STAGE 4... LIVE! my beautiful creature

Give him a couple of buttons for eyes, stitch in
a smile and some cheeky nips this is showbiz!

STAGE 5... EXPLOITATION & BEARDS

Display your amazing find to the idiotic public who will pay
handsomely for any little thrill you can dangle in front of
them. If you are a lady why not biro a few tattoos and a beard
onto your person for full carny effect? Josie Long stylee...



What's her problem?

COUNCIL Crap.

By TINC

A few years back I found myself in a bit of a vulnerable situation. I was at college and planning to start University the following September, meaning moving into University dorms, when I found out I was pregnant. Although this was a bit of a change of plan for me, I was overjoyed. Only problem was, you obviously can't bring a baby up while living in dorms, so the search for somewhere to live was on. There wasn't anyone with enough room for me and a baby, and with no income (as I was a poor student...) I couldn't start renting privately. The only option was to head down the council for help. I spoke to a housing adviser and explained my situation, letting her know I no longer had somewhere to live. I was told I could fill in a housing application form but it would take 3 months to be processed (first lie), I told her I wouldn't be able to find somewhere to stay for that length of time and we left it at that, as I didn't have everything I needed, passport etc, to finish the form. I came back the next day with everything and was met by the adviser who told me my form had been put through, so I could get bidding right away. A bit different than a 3 months wait, I was thrilled and relieved never the less.

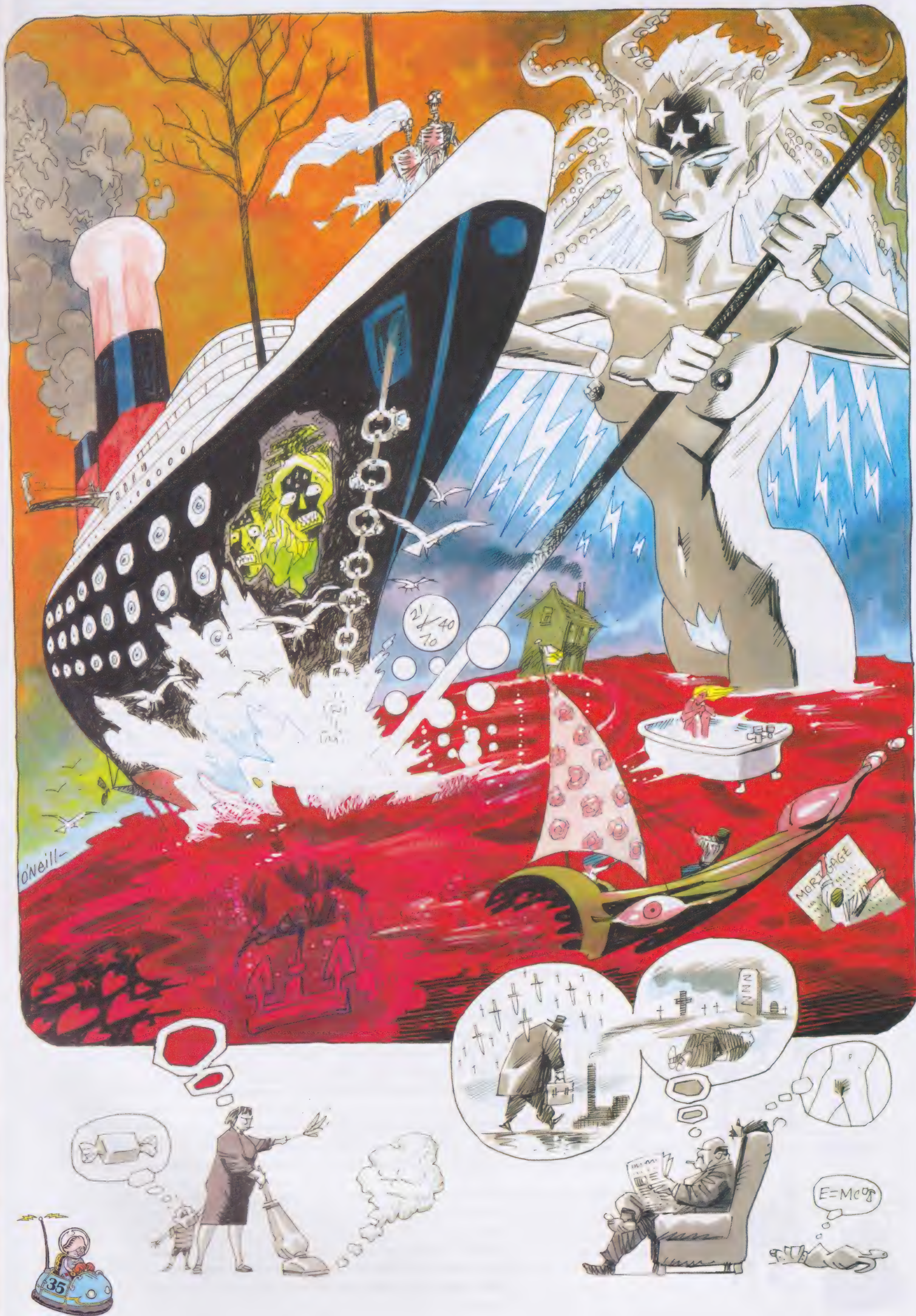
It was about a week until the next bidding cycle and I was excited to log on and get looking at the properties, until I saw my account details... I had been banded 'B' on a scale of 'A to D'. This didn't seem right as a friend of mine had a 2 bed flat with her partner and child and was in band 'B', and I was pregnant and homeless, a bit more in need, I thought? And so the phone calls and meeting began...

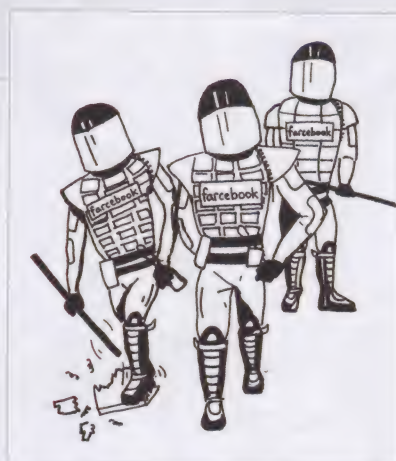
At first I was told by the housing adviser that although she personally agreed I should be banded higher, the review process would take weeks, and even then, it's down to their computer, which makes the decision for them?? Ok...? She told me, 'it could just be a case of, computer says noo.' A number of worried phone calls later I reluctantly agreed to sign up for the 'Deposit Bond Scheme' - basically where the council pays the deposit on a property so you can afford to rent privately. Sound ok, but I really didn't want to do this. It was going to be 2 months until I could sign up for this, scary stuff because that left under 3 months before the baby was due. But I didn't have another choice. 2 months went by and I heard nothing about the scheme, despite letting them know that I was running out of places to stay. I eventually got to speak to the adviser again, but I was in for a sharp shock. She told me it had not been agreed I'd go on the scheme, just that it would be discussed (absolutely not what she'd said before!) I was basically told I was wrong and that the conversation before had never happened. (more bullshit!). This happened again when ringing to confirm a meeting. She told me she had no record of it, so at this point I asked her to send everything she told me in writing (she didn't).

I was told I could only sign up for the scheme 3 weeks before I was due to give birth! How they think you can physically get, and move everything you need at almost 9 months pregnant, I don't no. With only 2 months before my baby was due, I had no option but to agree with the tossers and wait...

I felt so stupid because I'd been completely strung along. Things got really bad, I had run out of places to stay, so I made a desperate phone call and got practically shouted at, and was told there was nothing they could do. I couldn't be classed as homeless as I would need to be in council provided, temporary accommodation, and I couldn't be put into temp accommodation as the wasn't any?! (Find the logic in that). A few minutes later they rang back and told I had been moved into a higher band. What I'd needed months ago got done in a couple of minutes. All I had to do now was keep bidding and hope to hundreds of other people on the system weren't in quite as much need as me (I know plenty are). I ended up getting keys to a flat a couple of weeks after I had my daughter (she hung on, she was weeks late.) The council had 7 months to prevent me becoming homeless and what I've written about here is only a tiny fraction of what I encountered while asking for their help. It's scary because I know there's plenty of other in bad situations, young and old and they shouldn't have to battle with the people I spoke to, just to get honest advice. They either want to stick you in an inappropriate flat, or make you go private because there ain't enough local authority housing. Going private's not great for some, because it means keeping you on benefits to receive help with paying the rent, making it hard to go back to work. There is no temporary accommodation they can offer, because they've cut funding for B&B accommodation, which so many relied on. I've heard lots of other stories, a lot worse than mine. The Council's new system is supposed to be fairer but it's not. They can't even be straight with people when they ask for help. It's just a very unfair waiting game.







View photos of me (1000)

Send Me a Message

Poke me please !!

Information

Networks : Anyone

Current City : No Life

Friends

1,000,000,001 friends

See All



Richard hammond



George W Bush



Robbie Williams

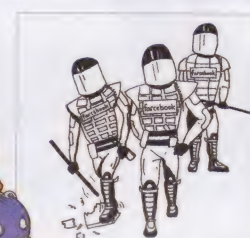


Anne widdecombe

Photos

2 of 100 albums

See All



Wall

Info

Photos

Boxes

Write Share Link Post Photo Causes Record Video

Write something...

Post

All Posts Posts by Me Posts by Others Wall-to-Wall

Today



Eco Chamber Wrote : Anti Social Networks

It is estimated that 15-22% of the world's population now have internet access. That's a staggering 1 to 1.5 billion people or the equivalent of the population of China and Bangladesh combined. If that still doesn't sound like much, try saying it slowly out-loud to yourself emphasizing the 'b' in billion like they do on ITV or Sky news reports. Presumably the other 78%-85% of the population are too old, too young, or more than likely too poor to log on. We seem to forget when we talk globally that such a large proportion of the world spend their lives trying to find food or access to fresh drinking water and not on an instant messaging service typing, 'OMG, THX HUNI, LUV U!'

So, with access to information on a scale never known before, with almost any question we need answering answered in seconds, are we ironing out these global inequalities? Are we coming up with solutions to climate change? Are we researching new energy methods to cope with dwindling supplies of fossil fuels?

Well, in a word, No.

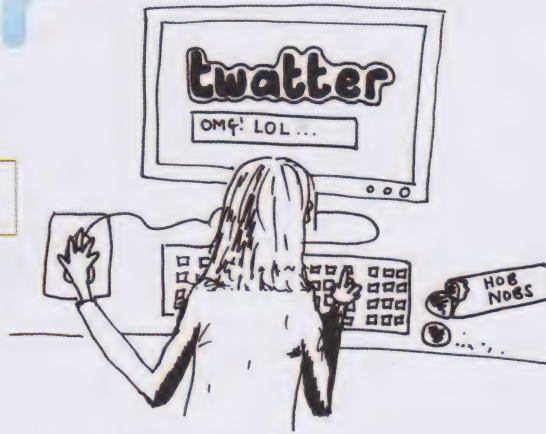
According to the stats site Alexa, after Google the most visited site in the world is the social networking site, Facebook. Now I must admit I do have a Facebook account, I am guilty as charged. If I never used social networking sites I don't think I'd have a problem with them. In the same way, I'm sure a 50-a-day smoker with emphysema has a lot more to say about smoking than someone who's never had so much as a drag in their life.

I resisted getting one for ages and received email after email from friends who had signed up. After a while I started to hear about parties days after they happened, I missed gigs and started to feel a bit like a social leper, shunned for my non-use of the social networking site. Around this time someone mentioned that a couple of good friends of mine from the past had signed up and mainly out of curiosity I cracked and got myself an account.

On the surface there's nothing wrong with social networking sites, you can catch up with people, take a look at what they're up to and even play scrabble with someone at the other end of the country, all from the comfort of your own home. However, it is my belief that rather than make us more sociable, these sites have not only simplified the way we talk to each other, they have also lessened meaningful contact. Now we only really seem to communicate with some friends on a very superficial level. Typing glib one-liners you've spent hours or even days mulling over is no way the same as phoning someone out of the blue. Similarly, commenting on the cuteness of a baby photo is not the same as picking up your friend's newborn and it is quite beyond me as to how sending a virtual drink can be anything like spending the night in a pub with your mates. Only small facets of anyone's life can be seen at any given time and it is just the ones they choose you to see. It is easy to look at someone's profile and look at their life as an endless stream of parties and holidays. It's rare that you read a status update or a tweet with 'Mike's marriage is failing' or see a series of pictures of Mike crying himself to sleep.



What are you doing ?



It is somewhat disturbing that we are being encouraged to become voyeuristic observers of our friends and families. I have a feeling you may feel a little violated if someone came into your house, rifled through all your photos, looked through your emails and/or texts and read your diary. Yet through blogging and sites like Myspace, Facebook and to a lesser extent Twitter we are encouraged to not only allow, but also take part in this type of behaviour and in doing so, eroding what little privacy we once had.

In recent years in the UK there has been massive opposition to the introduction of ID cards. The website No2id.net campaign against this single issue and what they call 'the threat to liberty and privacy posed by the rapid growth of the database state'. Yet as the debate on ID cards has grown so has membership to sites such as Facebook and Myspace. It seems that despite seeing the flaw in giving out personal information to our government we are willing to share it with everyone else on the planet including very large corporations with a vested interest in our data. These multi-million if not billion dollar businesses use this information to sell to companies who then directly advertise to us. Not so long ago I announced on Facebook that I was engaged to my partner only to find the next time I logged on I was bombarded with wedding related ads. I now wonder if we ever had children if I would start getting adverts for nappies and child-minders? (Incidentally there is a useful Firefox plug-in called grease-monkey that blocks these adverts).

Although irritating, this is really the tip of the iceberg of what could be done or is being done with our data and who has access to it. Links between Facebook and a number of US government agencies including the CIA and DARPA (Defense Advance Research Projects Agency) are greatly publicized simply typing 'Facebook CIA' into Google video or YouTube will show you a short film explaining some of these links.

During the early days of Facebook, when it was still an emerging social network site, intelligence agencies in America effectively bankrolled it through their venture capital organisations in order to use it as a tool to gather information about it's citizens. The before-mentioned Facebook linked organisation DAPRA (who have a very scary website) through their subsidiary company, the Information Awareness Office or IAO, sought to gather as much information as possible about everyone, in a centralised location, for easy perusal by the United States government, including (though not limited to) internet activity, credit card purchase histories, airline ticket purchases, car rentals, medical records, educational transcripts, driver's licenses, utility bills, tax returns, and any other available data. (source www.nzherald.co.nz).

I don't know about you but that statement sends shivers down my spine. It is scary to think how the Gestapo would have felt if during World War Two they had access to information about people's sexual orientation, religion and political allegiances. Or if social networking was around in the former East Germany the Stazi would have probably consisted of two officers knocking on the doors of anyone who didn't Tweet their whereabouts.

Now I know I might come across as a bit of a conspiracy theorist or nut but as energy supplies dwindle, the population rises and climate change threatens our food supplies there is a chance governments will try and find ways to control our increasingly despondent population. So the question is do we really want to give them the sticks to beat us with?

Police have already been known to monitor sites like Myspace and Facebook for under-age drinking, drug dealing and tracking down of fugitives. Arrests have been made through police monitoring of social network sites. In October 2009 a New York social worker and known anarchist was arrested for allegedly 'Tweeting' police whereabouts during the G20 protests. Police have been known to befriend suspects on Myspace or Facebook through false profiles and where young offenders are concerned, social networking sites are often the first place they will look whilst investigating a case. Some sources even claim that online surveillance is becoming so extreme in both the UK and USA that the only countries which are more monitored are China, North Korea, and Belarus.

So got any pictures tagged of you holding a joint or a can of spray paint you'd like to un-tag?

At the time of writing it seemed some light is perhaps emerging at the end of the tunnel from the self appointed 'friends of freedom' the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF for short - www.eff.org). On December 1st CNET reported the EFF were launching a case against six American government agencies including the CIA and the Department of Justice for 'refusing to release information about how they are using social networks in surveillance and investigations.'

It seems like transparency will be the new watchword for the next decade. We do have a right to know what is recorded about us and more importantly why! For someone who lived through the IRA and the Brighton bomb I find it hard to believe the threat of terrorism is any worse now and warrants further erosion of our civil liberties. Then as now, talks and withdrawal of troops are much more effective tools than surveillance at stopping any real or perceived terrorist threat.

At one time the Norwegian government tried to ban fishermen getting together in knitting circles as they were seen as too subversive. It seems that the powers that be will always seek to control a population by any means necessary and we are now seeing this in digital form. Social networking sites should really be for, you guessed it, social networking and not a tool for government stooges. In the Iranian elections, Facebook and Twitter served as tools for the people, exposing governmental corruption and bogus election results. In an ideal world this is exactly what these sites should be for. true democracy where people have a say in their future and not a method of Orwellian population control.



Eco Chamber

2000
following

20
followers

170
updates

Home

@Replies

Direct Messages

Favorites

Everyone

Following



Device updates
[set up SMS updates](#)

Words : By David Hamilton
Illustrations : Ellie Mains



THE SPINNING DOCTORS

Our rotating panel of health professionals are here to alleviate your medical misery

This month: Dr Nervy on **ANGER**

Nervy would perhaps let himself gradually become "Dr Angry" but for the warning images of Jeremy Clarkson ever present a button-press away on Dave. Angry (and grumpy) old men are a pain but he will allow himself a further little observation on the subject, continuing from our first issue.

Anger, ANGER, Nervy reckons, is the most misunderstood and unfairly despised emotion. The NHS officially fights it with the Inhumanity of Zero Tolerance and ignores it with the inaccessibility of substantive psychological therapies. And Dave trivialises it with a permanent screening of Jeremy Clarkson (who is mostly just aesthetically irritated) However, there are very many people who have very good and justifiable reasons to be REALLY angry – though of course emotions are not born out of logic but are the primitive, overwhelming and, while they last, totally engaging and ultimately exhausting responses which by-pass our thinking brains. They do always nevertheless have causes, and I believe that those causes can justify such intense responses and cannot necessarily be expected to be managed at the time they break out. OK, so why is Nervy angry? Real anger I would say basically ALWAYS originates from a sense of injustice. And paradoxically I'm angry that some of my patients are blamed for their anger which comes from an extreme sense of injustice in their lives which is maintained by an unwillingness of those who have power over them to listen, be honest and realistic and to admit their own mistakes. Somehow they are expected to deal with it and if they don't they are locked up, fined, or excluded in some way.... And if the injustice is great enough, then Nervy would not expect anything other than explosions. An explosion of course may well occur somewhere unexpected and untimely, like a blow-hole of molten lava that may perhaps open up when a crab randomly shifts a stone on the ocean floor. So while Nervy advocates tolerance, his own anger at the injustices he sees increases, and his efficacy potentially becomes severely compromised Nervy watched a film earlier this week – "The Class", which won the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival 2008, and is stocked by all good branches of Blockbuster. Watch it if you haven't already is Nervy's advice. (unless you really can't cope with subtitles). It is a story of a school teacher who tries to teach a class of delinquent kids in a way that overcomes their prejudices. What it illustrated (to Nervy) was that if you try to help those who have suffered injustice you have to be very, very careful...

At the best, the unlikely result will be that through amazing vision and scrupulous honesty, integrity and co-operation you will manage, albeit traumatically, to resolve the situation, win them over, and help everyone concerned – and one could see how the teacher in the film nearly got there. But most likely you will end up with what he did – just a slightly different mess from what there was originally, despite a lot of effort and pain, and be discredited yourself because without any support, ultimately you couldn't hack it and couldn't admit it, were not completely even-handed, got angry and lost the trust you had begun to establish. Nervy has taken note and feels daunted. Could an alternative approach be to try and promote anger as an acceptable emotion for anyone to express? Nervy believes that the current discrimination against those with personality disorders and behavioural problems, and the excommunication of so-called terrorists from the political arena are parallel errors which will continue to breed more anger and then violence until they are seen retrospectively to have been the crimes against humanity of our own time.



On Yer Bike, Go for a Hike - just do something

By Dr Feelgood

I see a lot of people who think they can't change. It is great to see the people come back who have had a go and now exercise regularly, they look different, more upright in posture, feel happier and some have been able to stop medication because of this.

So let's get active

The concept of exercise being good for you is nothing new. Hippocrates, the father of medicine, described the merits of physical activity as a "potential fountain of youth". Exercise has been referred to as one of the five fruits by Foresight, the government think-tank "Mental Capital and Wellbeing Report". This report describes Behavior that could help people feel better about themselves and was compiled by over 400 scientists over 2 years. The "five-a-day" programme of social and personal activities that can improve mental wellbeing, much as eating fruit and vegetables enhances physical health is:

People should try

1. To be active,
2. To connect with others,
3. To take notice of their surroundings,
4. To keep learning,
5. To give to their neighbours and communities. I will cover the other 4 "fruits" in later articles. What are the health advantages of regular exercise. There is evidence that regular exercise is linked with significant reductions in illness and death associated with the following:

- Cardiovascular disease; a third of deaths from coronary heart disease could be prevented if people would start taking more exercise.
- Diabetes; delaying onset and improving sugar control.
- Obesity.
- Cancer, particularly colon cancer.
- Arthritis with improved physical function.
- Osteoporosis, with fewer fractures.
- Prevents or delays the development of high blood pressure and reduces blood pressure in people with hypertension.
- There is also reduced anxiety and depression, enhanced well-being; improved self esteem. Exercise is as effective as antidepressants for mild to moderate depression. Indeed some are saying it is a wonder drug and wonder why it is not more readily prescribed.

NHS Northamptonshire has a vision for Northamptonshire to be the fittest county in the country

NHS Northamptonshire have various programmes in place, including the MEND programme (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition, Do it). The Mend programme is being run in local leisure centers equipping 7-13-year-olds, parents and carers with knowledge and skills to establish and maintain healthy lifestyles, this links with the national programme change4life, <http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/Default.aspx>. For older people there are 12 health trainers in the county, encouraging people to set targets to change to healthier lifestyles, providing advice and follow-up. Exercise on prescription is available across the town linking GP surgeries to leisure centres with reduced rates for induction, a personalized programme and reduced gym costs. Special provision has been made for Castle Ward (including Spring Borough), with reduced rates for Exercise Prescription via NHS / Borough Council partnership scheme "Fit for a Fiver". This gives three months of membership to Borough Council Gyms for £5, extended to another 3 months if the person attends the gym on average 3 times a week in first 3 months. With the healthy walking scheme and Age Concern cycling courses the list of people trying to encourage exercise goes on... and on.

What dose of exercise?

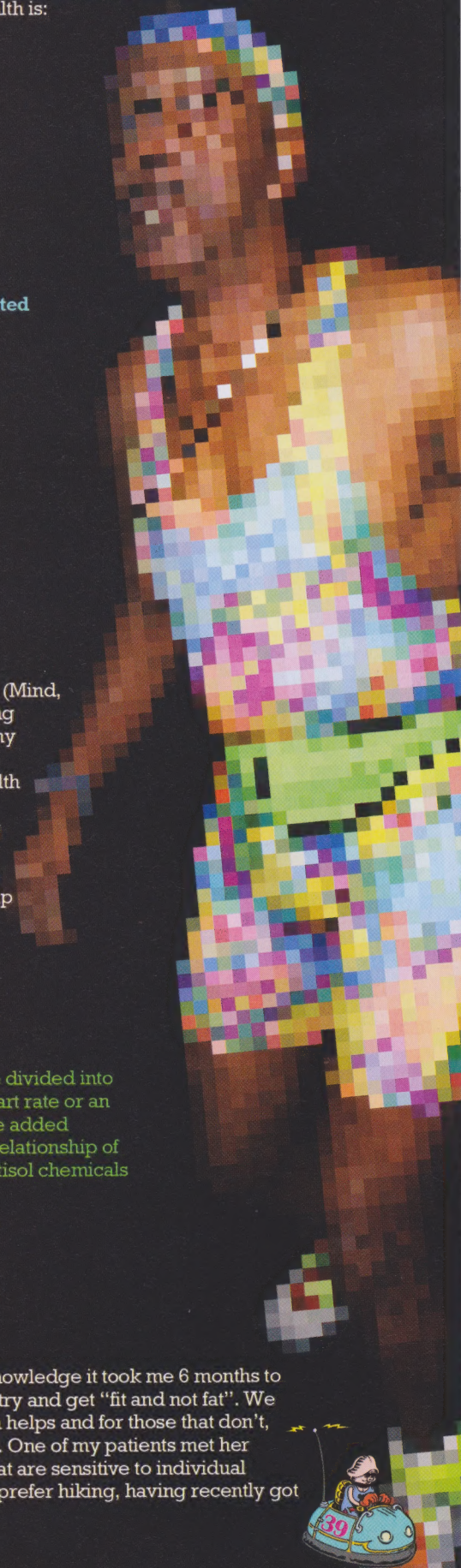
At least three 20 minute sessions per week is recommended. However these sessions can be divided into portions lasting at least eight minutes. Exercise should be moderate 50-69% of maximum heart rate or an exertion rating of 6-7/10. Exercising with others is better than exercising alone, you have the added advantage of someone to encourage you when you don't feel up to it, as well as the positive relationship of an exercise buddy. Exercising in the morning is best for our mood when our depressing cortisol chemicals are highest. Try and improve your exercise FIT score:

Frequency **I**ntensity **T**iming (duration).

Do something!

Getting into a habit takes time. Despite having been a keen sportsman, with all the above knowledge it took me 6 months to get into the habit of exercising 3 times a week once I had made the personal commitment to try and get "fit and not fat". We take time to change our habits, so be patient and keep trying. Having friends to exercise with helps and for those that don't, consider group exercise or seeing a health trainer to get you going and keep you motivated. One of my patients met her husband at an exercise class. You don't have to expose yourself to lycra. There are groups that are sensitive to individual needs so shop around and find one that suits you. It doesn't have to be the gym. I personally prefer hiking, having recently got to top of Kilimanjaro with a friend on behalf of Alzheimer Society - this covers all 5 "fruits".

Just do something.



CONTRIBUTORS & LOCAL SERVICES

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Former San Francisco underground cartoonist, professional pornographer, author, sculptress, lecturer, and illustrator of *Lost Girls* [written by Alan Moore]. Melinda now resides in Northampton for her sins.

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I do gardening, art work, chewing gum and kicking ass. Hate politicians and red tape. I like being outside.

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Web designer by day, comedy mag writer by night. Mustard is photocopied in front of a live studio audience.

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Author of books such as LINT, Slaughtermatic, And Your Point Is? and The Inflatable Volunteer, as well as creating the comics 'The Caterer' and 'Get That Thing Away From Me'. He is quite stern. www.steveaylett.com

Josie Long

Josie Long is sorry about her non-appearance and promises she'll be back next time. She showed us an excuse note from her mum, but it was in her handwriting and written on her knee, so we'll see.



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Illustrator, GSOH, 21ish, honest, reliable, short hair, short, hairy, likes drawing and colouring in.

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Lejorne Pindling

A young musician, trying to bring music back to a respectable state - Check me out on www.soundclick.com/illuzionproductionz

Norman Adams

Norman Adams is trouble, or at least will do until trouble gets here.

Tamsyn Payne

Tamsyn can be found mostly poking about in charity shops and testing cake. She has been justifying her haberdashery fetish for years by making and selling handmade thingies to people who seem to want them. She runs the Nook Cafe in the Fishmarket Gallery, just for the kicks.

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Calluz

Loves Molotow, doodling, wine and walls.



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Ellie Mains was roped in to illustrate Dave Hamilton's articles. Although this is her first ever commission, she rather enjoyed it and would be willing to do it again!

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Stone Age comic book artist, who refuses to be dragged beyond the 19th Century. Kevin has ink in his veins and dyslexia explains him having the world's largest collection of corn.

Wendi Jarrett

Wendy Jaret's Food for Health activities supports a range of local communities and their 'getting to grips with food'. She is keen to encourage enjoyment of the processes in her teaching, sharing and learning. After all, we all have ideas, traditions or 'tips' that can lead to something unexpected and new! Contact her on 07749873187 or email: wendi4news@hotmail.co.uk

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Tinc

Short and Smiley. Passing on straight information for you to take as you please. www.myspace.com/annabel_tinc

Martin Marprelate

Martin Marprelate has been active in radical politics since the English Civil War of 1645, and thinks we should behead the next King Charles as well for being guilty of Duchy Originals.

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Margaret Killjoy is an itinerant and adventurer who contributes regularly to SteamPunk Magazine and Strangers In A Tangled Wilderness. They have ablog: www.birdsbeforethestorm.net.

Steve Moore

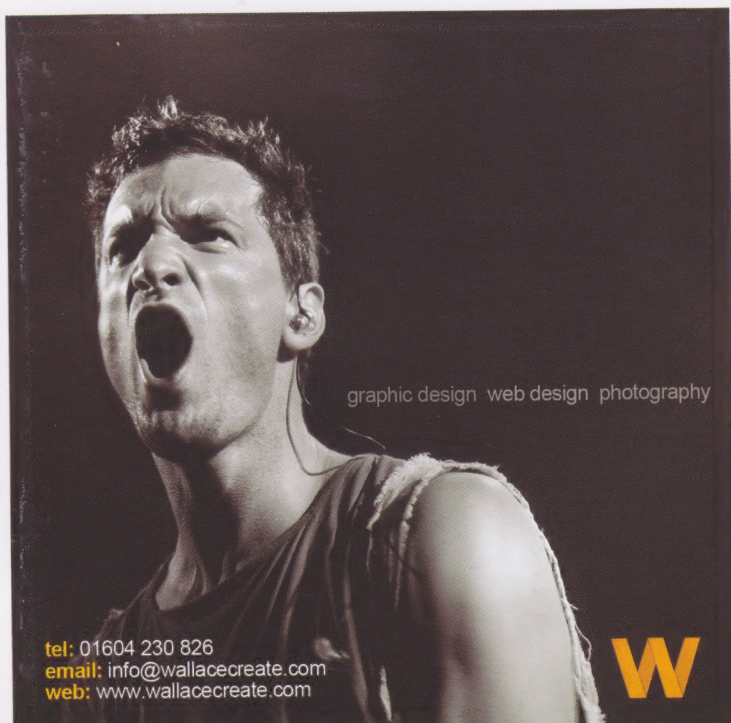
Steve Moore is an old loony who used to write comic-books. Now, thankfully, he writes what he likes.

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